Imprimatur,

April 6. 1687. GUIL. NEEDHAM.

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A MODEST ENQUIRY, WHETHER St. PETER WERE EVER AT ROME, AND Bishop of that CHURCH?

WHEREIN

I. The Arguments of Cardinal *Bellarmine* and others, for the Affirmative, are Considered.

II. Some Considerations taken notice of, that render the Negative highly Probable.

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A MODEST ENQUIRY WHETHER St PETER were Bishop of Rome, Or ever there? &c.

CHAP. I.

The Occasion of this Disquisition is Administred by the Romanists. It does not much concern Protestants: But of the highest Importance to the Church of Rome, as being made an Article of Faith, and her lastiest Pretensions bottom'd thereon; To overthrow which 'tis enough, if we shew, That their Arguments are not Cogent.

THERE is no man (I think) can desire more heartily than my self, the accomplishment of that *Prophecy*, When *Swords shall be turn'd into Plew-shares, and Spears into Pruning-hooks*: All the Weapons of Contention changed into Instruments for cultivating the Lords Vineyard. That our Controversies ended, no strife might remain among st any that profess the *Christian Name*, but an happy Emulation who should most glorifie God, and

An end of Controversy desirable.

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adorn the Gospel by a meek, Holy Conversation. That all our Tongues and Pens, freed from the unwelcome Toil of *Polemics*, might be jointly employ'd in *Eucharistics*, celebrating the Praises of the Divine Majesty, and exciting each other to the practice of *Virtue* and *Piety*.

By what obstructed.

But since the All-wise Soveraign Disposer of things, has not thought fit to allot that happiness to our Times, but that *Religion* (of it self the highest and most Sacred Bond of Love and Unity) is by the Ignorance, the Prejudices, the Passions and secular Interests of men, made one of the greatest occasions of Difference, or a common Subject of Debate; since there are a sort of People in the World, who neglecting the humble *Simplicity* of the Gospel, and dreaming of nothing less than *Infallibility*, *Universal Soveraignty*, and such like *Grandezza's* not only assume to themselves the highest Priviledges on the weakest Pretensions, but would impose their Dictates (no less groundless than Imperious) as necessary to Salvation, and Damn all that cannot see with such *Spectacles* as they please to put upon their *Noses*; I cannot but think every one, seriously studious of his future State, obliged to use all the just means he can for satisfaction in things that (are said to) concern his everlasting Peace and Happiness.

The occasion of this Discourse.

Amongst the several Questions agitated between us and the Church of *Rome*, some are purely *Theological*, the discussion of which most properly belongs to Divines: others (however advanced or made use of to boulster up lofty Pretensions) are no more than *Historical*, as relating to a meer and indifferent matter of Fact. And the subject of these Papers being of the latter kind, I thought a *Lay-man*, without incurring the censure of Presumption, might be allowed fairly to

sum

ſum up the Evidence produc'd on either ſide, leaving the Impartial and Judicious Reader to give the *Verdict* in the Cauſe, as he ſhall think fit. Eſpecially, ſince I undertook not this Enquiry out of any *Pragmatic Humour* of contending, or vain-glorious Itch of arguing an unneceſſary *Problem*; But as invited, or rather (if I may be allowed to ſay ſo) *provoked* thereunto by divers Books and Pamphlets very lately (as well as heretofore) publiſh'd amongſt us by the Gentlemen of the Roman Communion, wherein it has been aſſerted as a notorious Truth, or rather taken for granted as a thing out of Diſpute, "That St. *Peter* not only Preached the "Goſpel at *Rome*, but by Gods command fixed his "Chair there (that is, became the proper Biſhop of "that City) and therefore the Popes are his Succeſ-"ſors, *&c. The Pope or Biſhop of* Rome (ſays the Author of the late Book, Intituled, *A Papiſt Miſrepreſented and Repreſented*, ch. 18.) *is the Succeſſor of St.* Peter, *to whom Chriſt committed the care of his Flock, and who hath been followed now by a viſible Succeſſion of above* 250 *Biſhops.* The famous French Prelate now of *Meaux* (formerly of *Condom*) in his *Expoſition* not long ſince publiſh'd in Engliſh, *Sect* 21. has theſe words, *The Son of God being deſirous his Church ſhould be one, and ſolidly built upon Unity, hath eſtabliſh'd and inſtituted the Primacy of* Peter *to maintain and cement it, upon which account we acknowledge this Primacy in the Succeſſors of the Prince of the Apoſtles, to whom, for* this CAUSE, *we owe Obedience and Submiſſion*-- And again, *The Primacy of St.* Peter's *Chair is the common Centre of all Catholic Unity.* The Author of *two Queſtions, Why are you a Catholick? And why are you a Proteſtant?* p. 41. tells us of the *Biſhop of* Rome's *being Succeſſor of St.* Peter, *Prince of the Apoſtles, and Vicar of Chriſt.* Nay,

ſo

so confident they seem of our Credulity, That an Almanack called *Calendarium Catholicum*, for the last Year 1686. (commonly cry'd about the Streets, and dispersed throughout the Nation) sets it down as an unquestionable piece of Chronology, thus, *Since the removal of St.* Peter's *Chair from* Antioch *to* Rome [Anno 43.] *where he remained* 24 *Years, and was afterwards Crucified with his Heels upwards under* Nero, *then Emperour,* * 1647. *Years.*

* The Gentleman's skill in *Arithmetick* seems as extraordinary as in *History*, when he takes 43 out of 1686, there remains precisely 1647.

Now though this brisk assurance wherewith they deliver themselves, suits well enough with those that shall abandon their own understandings to make room for an *Implicite Faith* in Humane Guides, as being resolved to receive their Priests Dictates blindfold, and may perhaps make Impressions on spirits that are ready to entertain every *warm Asseveration* as an Oracle, rather than be at the trouble to examine its verity; yet in me (who have long since learnt of the great St. *Augustine* † *to defer that Honour to the Sacred Scriptures alone, of commanding my Beleif*) it had a quite contrary effect, and so much the more awakened my *Curiosity* to inquire what substantial *Proofs* they had for what they alledg'd so peremptorily.

† *Lib.* 2. *De Nat. & Grat. cap.* 61.

Protestants not much concerned in the Question.

'Tis true indeed, That it does not much concern Protestants, *Whether ever St.* Peter *were, or were not at* Rome; For even to grant, That he was the *first Bishop* of the Church there, will nothing prejudice our Cause with considering men, who before they can admit the modern Roman Claims, will besides *That*, expect some solid proof.

Things to be proved by Romanists, besides *Peter's* being Bishop of *Rome.*

1. That *Peter* was constituted by Christ Prince of the Apostles, or sole *Supreme Governour* on Earth of the Universal Church.

2. That

2. That this Empire of his was not only Personal, but *Successive*, and to be continued to the end of the World in some other Persons in the quality, and upon the account of being his Successors.

3. Why this supposed right devolved to his Successors in the Bishoprick of *Rome*, rather than to those of *Antioch*, which they say, was his first Episcopal See? Or that St. *Peter*'s removal from thence to *Rome*, was by Gods *special Command* to make *That* the Seat of Ecclesiastical Empire; and that accordingly he did actually bequeath his Authority to the *latter* rather than to the former? for his being put to Death at *Rome* (suppose it true) will not alone prove any such matter.

4. That the modern Bishops of *Rome* (after eight or nine and twenty * acknowledged *Schisms* in that *See*, God knows how many Usurpations, and *Simoniacal*, or other undue Elections; and notwithstanding manifest *Depravations* of, and *Apostacy* from St. *Peter*'s Doctrine, and a Conversation, for the most part, Diametrically opposite to his humble Holy Life) have yet every one of them been undoubtedly his true and *Lawful* Successors. *Onuphrius in Chron. Pont.* confesses 30.

All these Particulars, I say, as well as St. *Peter*'s being Bishop of *Rome*, must be undeniably proved, before their modern Pretensions can be adjudged good and valid: Yet in the mean time their continual noise of St. *Peter*, and of his being *Bishop of Rome*, and they his *Successors*, may be apt to inveigle some ignorant People, if no opposition be made thereto, nor *Caveat* given, That what they thus avouch as a notorious Truth, will upon a due scrutiny scarce appear so much as a *probable Opinion*. Therefore I chose to spend a few vacant Hours in rummaging this subject, not so much for the

 weight

weight of the thing it ſelf, as to obviate ſo popular a ſuggeſtion, and let all the World ſee, That what the Church of *Rome* builds its loftieſt ſuperſtructures upon, is meerly *Bogg and Quickſand*, a ſuppoſed matter of Fact, which they aſſert *Gratis*, as not being provable by any convincing Reaſon.

For on the other ſide, This Notion of St. *Peter*'s being Biſhop of *Rome*, is of the neareſt concernment to that Church, it is *prora & Puppis Papiſmi*, the main *hinge of Popery*. *Jus ſucceſſionis Pontificum Romanorum*, &c. *The Right* (ſaith *Bellarmin* *) of the Popes Succeſſion to *Peter is founded on this, That* Peter, *the Lord ſo commanding, placed his Seat at* Rome, *and ſat there until his Death.* Others of their moſt Learned Authors † ſay, That the Popes ſucceeding *Peter*, *is derived* (not from Chriſts Inſtitution, but) *from* Peter's *Fact*, which Fact was, that he made his Seat at *Rome*, and there dyed; and ſo it comes about that the Roman Biſhop ſucceeds him, depending altogether on this Fact of *Peter*, which contains his *being* at *Rome*; his being *Biſhop of* Rome; his *dying at* Rome, and his dying there, by our Lords *ſpecial appointment*, that the ſame might be the Miſtreſs of all Churches. Now what ever certainty, or rather how much *uncertainty* ſoever there be of all or any of theſe particulars, yet the whole in a lump is (if I miſtake not) made an *Article of Faith* in the Church of *Rome*. For Pope *Pius* the fourth in his Bull, preſcribing a Form of *Confeſſion of Faith* in purſuance of the Decrees of their Council of *Trent*, Dated 13 *Nov.* 1564. requires and commands all the Clergy and Regulars, *&c.* of his Church (amongſt other things) to take this following *Oath*, viz. *I acknowledge the Holy Catholick and Apoſtolick Roman Church*

* *De ſum. Pontif.* l. 2. c. 1.

† *Cojet. de Div. Inſtit. Pontif.* c. 13. *Canon Lob.* l. 6. c. 8.

Peter's being Biſhop of *Rome* an Article of their Faith.

Church to be the Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches; and I do ſolemnly promiſe and ſwear true Obedience to the Biſhop of Rome *the Succeſſor of St.* Peter, *Prince of the Apoſtles, and Vicar of Jeſus Chriſt* *. They will perhaps ſay, That the Article of Faith here intended, is not, That St. *Peter* was ever at *Rome*, or Biſhop there, but only that the the Roman Church is the *Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches*, and that Obedience is to be paid to its Biſhop. But who ſees not, That both the one and the other are expreſly grounded on *This*, That the Pope is *Peter's Succeſſor* (which cannot be meant of his *Apoſtleſhip*, for that they do not pretend to, but in his being Biſhop of *Rome*) and how ſhould that be, if St. *Peter* ſhould happen never to have been at *Rome*, nor Biſhop there? For 'tis impoſſible to prove or believe the Biſhop of *Rome* to be St. *Peter's Succeſſor* in that Biſhoprick, unleſs it *firſt* appear, That St. *Peter* was his *Predeceſſor* in that See; ſo that 'tis plain, this Article imports no leſs than if it were ſaid, *I believe that St.* Peter *was Biſhop of* Rome, *and that therefore, That Church is the Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches; and on that account to her Biſhops, becauſe they are St.* Peter's *Succeſſors, obedience is to be paid by all Chriſtians.*

* The very ſame Oath (amongſt other things) is at this day exacted of all Proteſtants that are pretended to be converted to the Roman Church in *France*, as I am very credibly aſſured.

Nor will it be to any purpoſe to ſay, That this is not one of the Church of *Rome*'s Articles of Faith, becauſe *only* the Eccleſiaſticks are injoyn'd to take this *Oath*; for what do they generally mean by *their Church*, when they talk of it even in a large ſenſe, but their *Clergy*? at leaſt if the Guides are obliged ſo to believe, and (as 'tis well known) all Lay-Members are to follow them, and believe as the *Church*, that is, as the *Eccleſiaſticks* believe; does it not follow, That *every*

ry one that is of the Roman Communion, must so believe? especially since 'tis there required, That they shall further swear in these Words, *Hanc veram Catholicam fidem, extra quam, NEMO SALVUS ESSE POTEST, quam in presenti profiteor & teneo, eandem ad ultimum vitæ spiritum constantissime retinere spondeo, voveo & Juro.* This *is the true Catholick Faith out of which no man can be saved, and which as at present I do profess and hold, so I do promise vow and swear most constantly to retain the same to my last breath.*

The sum of Christianity.

Nay more (if you will believe them) all Christianity stands on this foot. The same *Bellarmin* who affirmed that the Primacy of the Popes was founded on St. *Peter*'s being Bishop of *Rome*, acquaints us further, That on this Primacy of the Pope the Christian Religion depends; for these are his Words, * *Etenim de qua re agitur cum de Primatu Pontificis agitur? brevissime dicam, de summa rei Christianæ. What is it, I pray, we treat of, when we handle the Popes Supremacy? I will tell you in a word, 'tis touching the sum total or main Interest of Christianity.* Hence 'tis evident, that the Claims of the Church of *Rome* or her Bishops, to an universal Headship over all the Churches of Christ, to infallibility, and all the rest of their *far-spread* Pretensions, are bottom'd on St. *Peter*'s being once their Bishop, and fixing there his Episcopal Seat. Ask them why the Bishop of *Rome* rather than any other Bishop (*e. g.* of *Toledo* or *Canterbury*) is Head and Governour of the Universal Church? They will tell you, 'Tis because the *former* only is *Peter*'s direct Successor, to whom it was said, *I will give thee the Keys*; and, *Feed my Flock*: Ask them why the Church of *Rome* above all other Churches is exempt from falling into

* *De sum. Pontif. in Præfat.*

Errours

Errours in Matters of Faith? They will say; 'tis because she was founded by, and had for her first Bishop *Peter*, to whom it was said, *I have pray'd for thee that thy Faith fail not*; and,—*Thou art* Peter,—*and on this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* Which Priviledges were to descend to all that should succeed him in that *Chair*, which he should think fit to chuse, and happen to dye at. And the like Answers they must (according to their Principles and Pretensions) give in other particulars.

The reasonableness or necessity of examining this point.

Now who hears of such a stupendious *Superstructure*, but will expect that the foundation should be firm beyond exception? If they will perpetually be amusing us with the *Din* of *Peter's* Chair, and *Peter's* Successor, and the wonderful things they are thereby estated in; I cannot imagine why we may not be allowed to inspect their Title; To consider whether the ground-work of all these Magnificent Pretences have any thing of certainty? If the Popes Primacy be the *Centre of Catholick Unity*; The *Sum of Christianity*, a matter so Essential, that none without believing it, can obtain Salvation: And if this Primacy be founded on *Peter's being at* Rome, and fixing his Episcopal Chair there, why should any body be angry with me for endeavouring to satisfie my self or others therein? Does it not at this rate become the concern of all the Christian World to inquire into matter of Fact, whether St. *Peter* were indeed once at least in his Life at *Rome*, and Bishop there? Can we expect less than a *Divine Oracle*, some plain text of Scripture, to warrant so Important a Matter? At least, will any thing short of a Demonstration, proof beyond Doubt

Doubt or probable Contradiction, be allowed for good Evidence in a Case of such weight and moment?

The Negative not undertook to be proved.

I know well 'tis not only difficult, but many times impossible, to prove a *Negative*: I shall not therefore undertake, nor am I obliged to prove, that St. *Peter was never at* Rome, *or Bishop thereof*; But they that affirm *he was*, and draw thence such advantagious Inferences to themselves, are bound by all Rules of Law and Reason to make that *Affirmative* appear by sufficient Evidence. We are only on the *defensive part*; if they will require us on the pain of *Damnation* to submit to their Bishop of *Rome*, because he is St. *Peter's Successor*, they ought surely in the first place to *demonstrate* that he *does succeed* him; 'tis therefore enough for my purpose, and will invalidate all their claims derived from St. *Peter*, if I can shew, That all they have to alledge for his being at *Rome*, and Bishop there, is not necessarily conclusive; but that notwithstanding any thing they can offer, the contrary opinion is still at least probable, *viz.* That St. *Peter was not Bishop of* Rome, *nor ever there.*

Which I understand was long since asserted by *VELENZIUS*, a Learned Lutheran, in a just *Treatise* on this Subject; but not having been able to get a sight of his Book, nor knowing of any other Protestant that has *ex professo* treated thereof (though many have occasionally spoken sufficient to satisfie any impartial mind) I shall only offer such plain Natural Remarks as hastily occurr'd to my own thoughts and slender reading, leaving the further improving or disproving the matter to persons of a greater stock of Books and Judgment.

But

But this I can without injuring truth avow, That I have handled it with all ſincerity, not wittingly baulking any material Argument, Teſtimony or Objection, nor abuſing or miſciting any Author to ſerve a turn; for my ſole aim is a free impartial ſifting out of *Truth*, not the advancement of any *ſelf-intereſting Opinion*; and if any where I have ſtumbled into *Error*, 'tis the unhappineſs of my *Underſtanding*, not the pravity of my *Will*, being always ready with thanks to acknowledge miſtakes, when convinc'd thereof, as I have heartily and not altogether *indiligently* endeavoured to avoid them. Therefore I hope the Gentlemen of the *Roman Perſwaſion*, will not be offended at any honeſt innocent endeavours to plain the way to truth, and remove *Rubbiſh* out of their paſſage; for though they are zealous for that mode of Religion they have been educated in, or upon plauſible Motives entertain'd, yet I cannot perſwade my ſelf, that their *Noble Ingenuity* will ill-reſent the detection of any groundleſs Tales hatcht to ſupport it. There is no Gentleman but eſteems the Lye even in common Diſcourſe, as the greateſt diſhonour and affront imaginable, much more incenſed muſt he be at thoſe that would impoſe upon him to believe and maintain *a falſhood* as a point *of Faith*, and ſuſpend his *Salvation* upon dark ſtories and uncertainties; and conſequently will acknowledge his obligations to their pains (even though *repreſented* as *Enemies*) that would reſcue him from the hazard of ſo ſcandalous a Precipice; Truth is both the *Baſis* and Bulwark of Chriſtian Religion, which needs no pious Frauds, nor fond Tales, nor forged Evidence to maintain it, but is always ready to endure the *ſtricteſt Scrutiny*; he muſt either be a ſelf-deſigning *Hypocrite*, or

or (which generally is all one) a lewd *Atheist*, not a true *Catholick*, that will persist in owning or avouching *That* for certainty, which his *Reason* and *Conscience* cannot but tell him is either *false* or *doubtful*.

Thus much I thought fit to say in *Apology* for my self and the Undertaking, or (if you please) let it pass as a *Preface* to the Reader.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Roman Account of St. Peter's *Life.* Bellarmin's *five Arguments for his being at* Rome, *with an Additional one of other Romaniſts, Anſwered.*

'TIS but reaſonable, That the Church of *Rome*, which pretends to hold ſo vaſt a Lordſhip by Succeſſion from St. *Peter*, ſhould in the firſt place as clearly as ſhe can, make out her *Relation* to him. Now the ſtory ſhe tells, is in ſhort to this effect, *viz.* "That "ſome time after our Lords Paſſion, St. *Peter* went "into *Syria*, and became Biſhop of *Antioch*, and con- "tinued there, or (as they love to ſpeak) *held that See* "ſeven Years; and then he remov'd his Seat from "thence to *Rome*, and thenceforth was Biſhop of the "Church of *Rome*, and held the ſame four or five and "twenty Years, *viz.* until he was Martyr'd there un- "der *Nero*.

I am forced to uſe *General Terms*, becauſe moſt of thoſe that undertake to relate the matter, do wondrouſly vary in the Particulars, and cannot agree either in the *Year* wherein his Biſhoprick at *Antioch* ſhould begin; or in the time of its continuance; nay, there is a diſpute amongſt them, whether his being Biſhop of *Antioch* were *before* he went to *Rome*, or *after* he had been there. The time too, when he came to *Rome*, and the length of his Epiſcopate there, and other material Circumſtances, are very differently delivered. Touching which confuſion and interfeirings of the evidence, I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more in *another Chapter*, as alſo concerning the whole buſineſs of *Antioch*.

That which at preſent lyes before us, is to conſider what ſpecial Relation St. *Peter* had to *Rome* above other Churches. Concerning which, the Learned and Laborious Cardinal *Bellarmin* (whoſe Works, with thoſe of his no leſs diligent Brother *Baronius*, are the *grand Magazine* of that Party, and both whoſe Induſtry might juſtly claim the higheſt Commendation, if beſtowed in a Cauſe that deſerv'd it) ſtates *four Queſtions*. 1. Whether *Peter* were ever at *Rome*? 2. Whether he dyed there? 3. Whether he was Biſhop of *Rome*? 4. Whether after he had once aſſum'd that Biſhoprick, he ever chang'd it for another? All which he handles (after his manner) ſeverally, and at large. But indeed the *ſecond* comprehends the *firſt*; for if *Peter* were Martyr'd at *Rome*, he muſt needs be there: And the *fourth*, though he puts moſt ſtreſs upon it, may fitly be included under the *third*; for if they can prove, That St. *Peter* was at any time Biſhop of *Rome*, we ſhall not much trouble our ſelves, whether he afterwards remov'd from thence, both becauſe I think the practice of a biſhops *Tranſlation* from one See to another, was not altogether *ſo early* in the Church (their talk of the ſame Apoſtle's removal from *Antioch* to *Rome*, ſhall be further conſidered anon) as alſo becauſe I remember not any but their own *Onuphrius* that hath inſiſted upon, or objected any ſuch matter: ſo that the main Queſtion is only this, Whether St. *Peter were ever in a proper ſenſe Biſhop of* Rome? And becauſe that will be improbable in the higheſt degree, if (beſides other Reaſons) it cannot plainly be made appear, that he was at ſome time or other *there*; It will therefore be ſufficient to diſcuſs theſe two Queſtions.

The two chief Queſtions.

1. Whether St. *Peter were ever at* Rome?
2. Whether ſuppoſing he were there, he was *Biſhop* (in

(in the ſtrict and now uſual ſignification of the Word) *of that Church?*

To prove *Peter* to have been at *Rome*, Cardinal *Bellarmin* produces five Arguments, which we ſhall ſeverally conſider.

The firſt from that Text, 1 *Pet.* 5. 13. *The Church that is at* Babylon *ſaluteth you.* By *Babylon* here (ſaith he) is meant *Rome*; therefore *Peter* when he wrote that Epiſtle, was *there*: Now that *Peter* did mean *Rome* by the word *Babylon in that place*, he would prove, 1. Becauſe *Euſebius* Records, that one *Papias* did ſay, That this Epiſtle *of* Peter *was written from the City of* Rome, *which the Apoſtle did there Tropically call* Babylon: To which purpoſe the Cardinal alſo cites St. *Hierom* and others, as being of the ſame Opinion, or rather following *Papias* therein. 2. Becauſe *Rome* in the *Revelations* is frequently call'd *Babylon.*

To which I anſwer.

1. This is proving *Ignotum per Ignotius*, a doubtful thing by a thing utterly *Improbable*; a controverted matter of *Fact* by an uncertain groundleſs *Opinion.* Does not all the World know, that there were at that time two great Cities, whoſe proper name was *Babylon?* One in *Aſſyria*, famous in all ancient Hiſtories, as being the ſeat of the firſt Monarchy: The other in *Egypt*, menti-on'd in *Strabo*, l. 17. and by *Ptolomy* called *Babulis*, the ſame (if I miſtake not) which at this day is called *CAIRO*, or near it; and why might not *Peter* date his Epiſtle from one of theſe? For as he, for the moſt part, preached to the diſperſed Jews, of whom, no doubt, many were ſcattered through *Chaldæa* and *Aſſyria*; ſo he might probably exert his Miniſtry at the *firſt mentioned* Babylon, being ſo eminent a place on the ſame Continent, and at no great diſtance from *Jeruſalem*, eſpeci-

cially since *Nicephorus* tells us he Preached *all through* Palestina *and* Syria.

Nor is this only my private Sentiment, the great *Scaliger* * speaks boldly, Petrus Romæ *nunquam fuit, sed prædicabat* τῆ διασπορᾶ Asiæ, *cujus Metropolis erat* Babylon, *ex qua scribit Epistolam suam.* Peter *was never at* Rome, *but preached to the dispersed Jews in* Asia, *the Metropolis whereof was* Babylon, *from whence he wrote his Epistle.* Whom the very Learned *de Marca* Archbishop of *Paris* seconds in these Words, † *Although the Ancients imagined, That* Peter *by the word* Babylon *signified the City of* Rome; *yet* Scaliger's *conjecture is probable, who thinks that* Peter *wrote from* Babylon *it self, this Epistle to the dispersed Jews.*

Annot. in Jo. 18. 31.

† De Concord. Sacerd. & Imper. lib. 6. cap. 1. Sect. 4.

Or on the other side, if it be true, which the foresaid *Nicephorus* writes *, *That from* Pontus, Galatia, &c. Peter *went down into* Egypt, *where he created St.* Mark *Bishop of* Alexandria; then why might he not send this Epistle from the *Egyptian Babylon*? so that either way, by *Babylon*, is far more likely to be understood one of those places, rather than *Rome*. For,

* Lib. 14. cap. 39.

2. What an extravagance is it to imagine that S. *Peter* should *disguise* and *conceal* from whence he wrote? or qualifie the place, which he had chosen to be his Episcopal See, and perpetual Seat of Church-Soveraignty (as they would have it) with so *uncouth* a Title, when there was not the least colour of reason (as far as we can now learn) or occasion why he should so do, nor any example of the like kind to be found? For though S. *Luke* in the Acts, and S. *Paul* in his Epistles, frequently speak of *Rome*, yet they never call it *Babylon*.

Now when the Apostle says, the *Church at Babylon* salutes you, certainly he intended (as all men do in their Epistles) that they should know *where* he was, and

and *who* they were that saluted them; but this was (I think) impossible for them to do, if by *Babylon* he meant *Rome*, no Author either Civil or Sacred having *then* ever call'd it so.

3. That St. *John* in the *Revelations* above fifty Years after (for *Baronius*, who says this Epistle was wrote *An. Chr.* 45. tells us also that the *Revelation* was wrote *An.* 97.) did call *Rome Babylon*, is nothing to the purpose; for though a *Tropical* Denomination suit well with a *Prophetick* Style, yet it will not follow, that in a plain Epistolary Salutation, a proper Name must be wrested from its genuine signification to such an abstruse and remote sense. St. *John*, writing mysterious Prophecies, used *Types* and *Figures* to express future things; but that *Peter* in a familiar Recommendation, should do so, has neither *Truth* nor *Probability*. The Reason why St. *John* denominates *Rome*, *Babylon* (though represented in a Vision) was not yet *actually in Being*; for it was by way of allusion, That as *Babylon* of old held the Jews, the then People of God, in Temporal Captivity, so *she* should in time to come bring Christians into a *Spiritual Vassalage*; and thence she is call'd *Mystery Babylon*.

It seems the Learned Cardinal thought some Text of *Scripture* would be expected to prove *Peter's* being at *Rome*, and finding nothing looking that way, was fore'd to hedge in this, though it cost him *dear*; for thereby he confesses and proclaims *Rome* to be the *Apocalyptical Babylon*. But though an *hard pinch* reduced him to this necessity, yet he hopes to secure his retreat, by affirming, *That* Rome *is termed* Babylon, *not in respect of the future Roman Church, but as it was the Seat of the Roman Empire that then domineer'd over the Earth, as* Babylon *did of old*.--But this evasion is as *gross* as the occasion of it, since 'tis plain, the *Revelations* from the 4*th* Chapter, especi-

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especially, is a *Prophetick* Book, not *Historical*; for so are the expres words there, *v.* 1. Come up hither, and I will shew *things that shall be hereafter.* And also it relates all along to the future state of the *Church*, not to the present condition of *Worldly Empire*; and almost all Interpreters agree, That this *Babylon* which, *Rev.* 17. is called *The Scarlet Whore*, &c. described by this Title, *Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth*; can be no other than that *Antichrist* which was to sit in the Temple of God, that is, in the Church, 2 *Thess.* 2.

4. As for what is alledged, that *Papias*, St. *Jerome*, or others, thought this Epistle of *Peter* might be written from *Rome*, Tropically call'd *Babylon*; it is at most but *their Opinion* touching a matter of Fact long before their time; and as we have shewn that there is no *need* or *Reason* for admitting any such Trope, so the Ancients may be excused, if they understood not the true occasion *why*, or in what respect *Rome* was call'd *Babylon*, since that which qualified it such, and was intended to be signified by the Divine Vision, appeared not in the World till some Ages afterwards. Whence that Mighty *Monarch of Letters*, as well as of *Great Britain*, King *JAMES* the First (Grandfather to our present Gracious Soveraign) in his *Præmonition* to all Christian Princes, judiciously observed in a like Case. That *the Fathers of the first Ages speak of this matter but only by conjectures, whereas we speak of it by experience.* For Scripture Predictions after the Events, become Histories; and the Promises, Performances; and so are much more intelligible.

5. As for the credit of *Papias*, the first Suggester of this Interpretation, and consequently the *first Author* in the World (for ought I can hear) that gave occasion to the

the Conceit of *Peter's* ever *being at* Rome, we ſhall give a further account anon.

In the mean time cannot but remark, That this Interpretation is yet the more *abſurd*, becauſe the ſame *Bellarmin*, who to maintain *Rome's* Supremacy, becauſe of *Peter's* being *there*, doth here, without any probable grounds, expound *Babylon* to be *Rome*, does elſewhere * aſcribe that Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, cited 1 *Pet.* 2. *Behold I put in* Sion *a corner-ſtone elect and precious*, &c. to be meant of the *Pope* (at leaſt ſecondarily) contrary not only to St. *Peter* and St. *Paul's* expreſs Interpretation, who attribute the ſame (as indeed it wholly and ſolely belongs) *to Chriſt*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 6. and *Rom.* 9. 32. but alſo to that of *our Lord*, who refers thoſe words to himſelf, *Matt.* 21. 42. ſo that the Cardinal makes *Rome* to be both *Sion* and *Babylon*; he will have it *Babylon*, to prove *Peter* there, and *Sion* to exclude (in effect) Chriſt from being Head of the Church, and advance the Pope in his ſtead.

* Preface to his Treatiſe *De Pontif.*

The ſecond *thing* (for I know not how to call it an Argument) brought to prove St. *Peter's* being at *Rome*, is this, There were many Chriſtians at *Rome*, nay, a large and flouriſhing Church gathered there *before* Paul came thither, as appears by his Epiſtle (which 'tis evident he wrote before ever he had been at *Rome*) But *who* gathered that Church, if *Peter* were not at *Rome*?

Bellarmins ſecond Proof.

There is no doubt but the *Learned Author* ſaw through the *weakneſs* of this Diſcourſe, and therefore put it by way of *Query* to amuſe weak heads, rather than as an Argument to convince the Learned; for how odly would ſuch a Syllogiſm look from the Pen of a Cardinal? *There were Chriſtians at* Rome *before* Paul *came thither*, ergo *St.* Peter *was there before him*, as if there were no other Preachers of the Goſpel of the bleſſed Jeſus, but thoſe two. For,

Anſ.

1. Not

1. Not to urge, That though we read of Saints at *Rome*, yet we no where find the *Church of* Rome, or a Church at *Rome* mentioned *in terminis*; the Holy Spirit possibly forbearing to qualifie it with that Title in Holy Writ, as a check to their foreseen Usurpations. And although it expresly tell us of several other Churches first planted by *this* or *that* Apostle, yet it says not that *any Apostle* was the first Seeds-man of the Gospel *at Rome*. Not to insist I say upon this,

2. Let us consider how and by whom Churches were gathered in *Samaria* and at *Antioch* (which they make *Peter's* other and first Bishoprick); if we may be allowed to read and credit the *Bible*, there we find, that by a great Persecution at *Jerusalem*, the Disciples (except the Apostles) were scattered abroad, *every where* (and so who knows but some of them to *Rome*) *preaching the Word*, Acts 8.4. particularly *Philip*, a Deacon in *Samaria*, made great numbers of Converts, *v.* 6. which when the Apostles heard of, *they sent thither* Peter *and* John (an odd procedure for Subjects to send their *Soveraign* on an errand, if they had thought *Peter* such) who having further spread the Gospel in *Samaria*, return'd again to *Jerusalem*, v. 25. others of the said scattered Disciples Preached the Lord Jesus to the Grecians at *Antioch*, and *many believed and were turned unto the Lord*, Acts 11. 19, 20. whereupon *Barnabas* was sent to them, who brought *Paul* into *Antioch*, and a whole Year *they* (viz. *Paul* and *Barnabas*) *assembled themselves with the Church* (so that there was *a Church* there before) and taught much People, and the Disciples were first called *Christians* there, *v.* 26. If therefore Christianity (both *Name* and *Thing*) were first planted at *Antioch* (which they say was *Peter's* first Diocese) neither by *Peter*, nor by any Apostle, but by certain *scattered Disciples*, why might not the like happen at *Rome*?

3. 'Tis

3. 'Tis evident that the Gospel had been Preached to many *Romans* at *Jerusalem* immediately after Christ's Ascention; for when the Apostles received the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and Preached in other Tongues, 'tis expresly said, That amongst the multitude that came to hear them, *There were Strangers of* Rome, *Acts* 2. 10. St. *Paul* also witnesses, That *Andronicus* and *Junia* (who dwelt at *Rome* when he wrote his Epistle, that is, before he came at *Rome*) *were in Christ* (that is, professed the Christian Faith) *before himself* (which must be at least 5 or 6 years before *Peter* is pretended to come at *Rome*) And that *they were of Note amongst the Apostles*, Rom. 16. 7. Why then might not *They* by their pains and zeal, at least in some measure, gather a Church there? Besides, the Scriptures mention not which of the Apostles, or who else in particular, collected divers other Churches, must they therefore *all* be ascribed to the particular pains of St. *Peter*?

4. What the Cardinal affirms, That *none of the Ancients* name any other but *Peter* that should first Preach the Gospel at *Rome*, is not strictly true; For he himself a little after confesses, That *Clemens* (whom they will have to be *Peter*'s Successor) in the first Book of his *Recognitions*, and *Dorotheus Tyrensis*, Record, *That* Barnabas *Preached at* Rome *in the Reign of* Tiberius; that is, within 3 or 4 years after our Lords *Crucifixion*; Whereas their most common story is, That St. *Peter* came not there till the second of *Claudius*, which must be about five years at least after the Reign of *Tiberius*.

Barnabas said to Preach at *Rome* before *Peter*.

'Tis true the Cardinal endeavours to weaken the credit of those Authors, by saying, *That the first is thought to be Apochryphal; and the latter contains many things fabulous and false*; yet still as they are of their *own producing*, and he will not deny but they are *Ancient*; so whenever they serve his Turn, he is ready enough to

make use of them, as *Authentick Witnesses*. And indeed if all Authors must be discarded that contain many things *fabulous and false*, His numerous Citations from pretended Antiquity would grow very thin and inconsiderable.

Besides, That Testimony which he himself mentions from *Orosius* and *Platina*, That the Senate of *Rome* in the Reign of *Tiberius*, when upon a Letter from *Pilate* concerning the *Miracles of Christ*, that Emperor mov'd them to *Canonize* or receive him amongst the number of their Gods, not only refused so to do, because *Pilate* wrote to *him* and not to *them* about it, but also made a Decree *Exterminandos* [or *Pellendos*, as *Platina*'s word is] *ex Urbe esse Christianos*; That *Christians should be banisht or driven out of the City*: Proposing also (says *Platina*) *Rewards to the Informers against them*; seems to me a plain Evidence, That there were *Christians there* in the Reign of *Tiberius*. And I dare appeal to the common sense of any indifferent man, whether the Cardinal's *Glos*, That the meaning thereof was only this [That if any Christians *should come there*, they should be Banisht] be not forced, and almost Ridiculous; Especially since with *Orosius* he confesses, *Tiberium panam statuisse Accusatoribus Christianorum*; That, *Tiberius made a Law to punish the Accusers of the Christians*; and *Platina* says the punishment threatned was *Capital*; For tho it be not hard to Believe, That *Tiberius* acting as an absolute Emperor, and having received an affront in this very matter from the Senate, might set forth an Edict contrary to the Senates Vote; yet it is altogether absurd to imagine, That he should threaten to punish the accusers of Christians, if indeed there were there no *Christians* to be accused.

Now if there were Christians at *Rome* in the days of *Tiberius*, since *Peter* is not pretended to have come to *Rome*

Rome till the time of *Claudius*, before whom, after *Tiberius*, *Caligula* reigned very near four years; it follows undeniably, That the Church of *Rome* was not *first planted by St.* Peter.

Bellarmin's third Argument is, That *Grave Authors* write, That *Mark* wrote his *Gospel at* Rome, according to what he had heard *Peter* Preach: Therefore *Peter was at Rome.* And here cites in the first place his Friend *Papias* again, and after him others. The Third Argument.

1. What value we are to have for *Papias's* Testimony, will appear hereafter; and 'tis most likely that the other Authors followed him, so that the whole depends upon his Authority; but the notion it self is indeed *Impious* and Derogating from that reverence we ought to pay to the *Books of the Gospel*; For there is no well-instructed Christian but believes, that St. *Mark* and every other Evangelist wrote by the special assistance and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and not only by *Hear-say*, either from *Peter* or any others. *Answ.*

2. The meaning of those Authors may be, That *Mark* wrote his Gospel by the excitement or privity of St. *Peter*, but that therefore *Peter* preached at *Rome*, follows not; and most of the Ancients reckon St. *Mark* the Evangelist to be Bishop of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, therefore it is not probable, that he ever was, or continued long at *Rome.*

3. That which might deceive *Papias*, and the rest, might be, that, whereas they had heard some-body say, St. *Mark* the Evangelist was a Companion of St. *Peter*, and wrote his Gospel partly at his motion, and also found one *Mark* mentioned in several places of the New Testament to have been at *Rome*, as *Coloss.* 4. 10. *Philem.* v. 24. They thence concluded, That St. *Peter must be at Rome*, and *Mark* write his Gospel there. But in truth, *that Mark* whom in Scripture we find to have

been at *Rome*, ſeems not to be the Writer of the Goſpel, but the ſame that is mentioned, *Acts* 12. 12. Who is there ſaid to be otherwiſe named *John*, and *Mark* only his ſirname; The ſame whom *Paul* and *Barnabas* (whoſe Siſters Son he was, *Col.* 4. 10.) took along with them from *Jeruſalem* to *Antioch*, v. 25. But after ſome time he left them, and return'd from *Pamphilia* to *Jeruſalem*, Chap. 13. 13. About whom, on that occaſion, a controverſy aroſe between *Paul* and *Barnabas*, with which laſt he went into *Cyprus*, Ch. 15. 32. But was afterwards at *Rome* with *Paul*, as appears by the Texts before cited, and ſometimes imployed by him to viſit the Churches abroad, as is probable from *Col.* 2. 4, 10. Now that *this Mark* could not (according to their own account) be the Evangeliſt, appears,

I. Becauſe St. *Paul* in his ſecond Epiſtle to *Timothy*, Ch. 3. 11. *ſends for him again to Rome*; which Epiſtle *Bellarmine* ſays was written in the *Fourteenth year of Nero*; and indeed it ſeems to be but very little before St. *Paul's Death*, from his words, *Chap.* 4. 6. *I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand*; whereas *Mark* the Evangeliſt dyed in the 8th year of *Nero*, as *Hierom*, *De Viris Illuſtribus*, witneſſes, and is elſewhere own'd by *Bellarmin* himſelf: And would *Paul* ſend for a man that was dead five or ſix years before?

II. Becauſe themſelves make the Evangeliſt, not only to write his Goſpel at *Peter's* motion, but to have been his common Attendant or Aſſiſtant in his Travels and Preaching the Goſpel, and by him to have been made Biſhop of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, where he ſuffered Martyrdom. Whereas the *other Mark* that was at *Rome* did (as we find in Scripture) generally accompany *Paul* and *Barnabas*, or one of them.

So

So that when any of the Ancients talk of *Mark's* writing his Gospel at *Rome* after *Peter's* Dictates, they seem unwarily to *confound* the story of the two *Marks*, and *jumble* them into one, and so contradict themselves. And therefore, Whether St. *Peter's* being at *Rome* can thence be sufficiently proved (especially when 'tis most probable the whole was borrowed and derived at first from the Hear-say of *Papias*, or some such *Apocryphal Traditionist*) is left to the judgment of the discreet Reader.

Bellarmin's fourth Argument is drawn from the story of *Peter's* Victory over *Simon Magus* at *Rome*: And indeed the same, if we may credit their Authors, is not only a proof of St. *Peter's* being at *Rome*; but one of the *Two Causes* which moved him to remove from *Antioch* thither; For thus *Platina* —— *Petrus Romam Caput Orbis venit, & quod hanc sedem Pontificali Dignitati Conuenientem Cernebat; & huc profectum intellexerat Simonem Magum*; Peter *came to* Rome *the Head of the World, both because he saw this was a seat convenient or suitable for the Pontifical Dignity, and also for that he understood* Simon Magus *was gone thither*: So that it seems his going to *Rome* was not *Jubente Domino*, by any special command from Christ, as *Bellarmin* would have it; but because *Rome* being at that time Metropolis of the World, he thought no other place so worthy to be the seat of his Ecclesiastical Principality, and was afraid (forsooth) lest *Simon* the Sorcerer should usurp and get possession of it before him, and therefore he hastened thither to expel him. —— *Sed hoc obiter.* The fourth Argument.

To shew the weakness of this pretence, I shall, first consider what we find in Scripture touching this *Simon Magus*; 2*dly*, Relate the Story they tell about him at *Rome*: And 3*dly*, Shew the *Vanity* thereof, and that the same was first hatch'd by Fabulous Authors. *The Answer.*

1. We

1. We read *Acts* 8. That *Simon Magus* lived at *Samaria*, and having long *Bewitcht* (or seduced) the people there with Sorceries (or Jugling Impostures) was highly esteemed: But upon *Philip*'s Preaching, seemed to Believe the Gospel, and was Baptized, and wondred at the Signs and Miracles which were done; but when *Peter* and *John* were sent down thither from the rest of the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, and on their Prayers, and laying on of Hands, the Believing *Samaritans* had received the Holy Ghost (that is, as I conceive in this place, were endued with the Power of speaking *strange Tongues*, and working of *Miracles*) This *Simon* offered him Money, saying, *Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost*; But *Peter* said unto him, *Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the Gift of God may be purchased with money; Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of Iniquity.* Then answered *Simon*, and said, *Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things that ye have spoken, come upon me.*

This was indeed a [illegible] *Victory* obtain'd by *Peter* over this *wretched Magician*, but atchieved at *Samaria*, not at *Rome*. And from such his wicked overture, all Giving and Receiving of *Money*, or other secular profit for any Office or Preferment in the Church, is ever since (from his name) called *Simony*.

But the Combat and Victory meant by *Bellarmin* is supposed to have been *at Rome*, and thus related by *Platina*——"That the said *Simon Magus* had the confi-"dence to vye Miracles with *Peter* about raising a *dead*

"*Boy*

" *Boy* to Life, whose Corps his Charms at first did seem " to move; but when afterwards, notwithstanding all " the Conjurer could do, the Lad lay breathless as before; " yet at the Command of *Peter*, in the Name of Jesus, " he revived, and stood on his feet: Which *Simon* the " Magician took so much in dudgeon, that he told the " people they should behold him *fly from* the Capitol " to Mount *Aventine*, if *Peter* would but follow him; " whereby they should perceive, which of the *Two* was " the *greatest Saint*, *and most beloved of God*. But " when he was got upon the wing, at the Prayer of " *Peter*, stretching out his hand towards Heaven, and " beseeching God, That he would *not suffer so many* " *People to be deluded with Magick Arts*, down came *Si-* " *mon* and broke his Thigh, whereof *shortly after* he " dyed. And this being so, *Peter* must needs be at *Rome*.

1. Now let any sober Reader judge, Whether this whole story in all its Circumstances do not smell rank of *Romance and Fable*. That *Simon* the Conjurer of *Samaria* should ramble to *Rome*, and the blessed Apostle *Peter* travel thither after him so many hundred Miles on purpose to vye Miracles with him there, when there were not wanting many Saints in that City in that Age when God was pleased to give frequent Testimonies to his Church by *Miracles*, who might as well have confounded the Sorcerer: That he who was so far convinced of the mighty Power of God in *Peter* at *Samaria*, as to beg his Prayers, should offer to challenge him to work Miracles at *Rome*. That being so shamefully baffled in the business of raising the *Dead Boy*, whom *Peter* presently raised to Life, he should yet have the confidence to propose a new *Tryal of Skill* by Flying. *Credat Judæus Apella.*

But waving the *Improbabilities*, being a matter of Fact, the Credit thereof must wholly depend on the *first*

first Relaters; and pray observe from what Authors they
* Lib 2. Ca. 13. have this story; *Eusebius* * says it was reported by *Clemens*, and by *Papias*; and *Bellarmin* adds, *Egesippus de Excidio Hierosolym*, l. 3. c. 2.—As for *Papias*, we have nothing of his extant; nor if we had, is his Credit much, as will by and by appear; and the other two supposed Books of *Clemens* and *Egesippus* are *both Forgeries*, contrived in after times under those ancient Names, and not written by them, as amongst other feigned Antiquities, I doubt not but to satisfie the Reader in a particular Chapter on that Subject.

And what man of sense will give so much as a common Historical Credit, much less admit that as an *Article of Faith*, which has no better Foundation than what is bottom'd on counterfeit Authors? Especially since it is not pretended to be attested by any that were *Eye-Witnesses*, or that liv'd for a considerable time after; nor is it credible that so wonderful and publick a *Miracle*, if truly transacted at *Rome*, should have escaped the notice and mention of some of those *Roman Historians* who have so exactly given us the Memoirs of that curious and very Learned Age.

2. This Tale does not *quadrate* or hang well together; for *Platina*, as 'tis plain by his Words, makes this Exploit done at *Peter's first coming* to *Rome*; for as he assigns one main part of his Errand in going thither, to be for obviating the mischiefs of that Impostor; so by his Relation the matter seems to have been quickly determined after *Peter's* arrival; and he expressly says *Simon Magus dyed of that fall*, non ita multo post, *not long after*: Now they say *Peter* went to *Rome* in the second Year of *Claudius*, Anno Chr. 43. and so in that or the next Year *Magus* must be defeated. But Cardi-
* Bar. Tom. 1. ad Ann. 68. No. 16, 17. nal *Baronius* * assures us *Simon Magus did not dye till*

the

the Year of our Lord 68. that is in the 13*th* Year of *Nero*, the very next Year before they ſay *Peter* ſuffer'd there; and no leſs than about 25 Years after they pretend *Peter* went firſt to that City. Did St. *Peter* go to *Rome* almoſt on purpoſe to ſuppreſs the Magician, and yet could not meet with him in all that time? Or did the Sorcerer lye ſick of the bruiſes of his fall, four or five and twenty years? Then how did he die *quickly after*? If *Simon* were playing his tricks at *Rome*, and making the People believe he was a *Great God* in the beginning of *Claudius*'s Reign, and died not till almoſt the end of *Nero*'s, that is 25 years after, (juſt the term they aſſign to St. *Peter*'s coming and continuing Biſhop there) It would almoſt perſwade one to ſuſpect a miſtake, and that they unhappily attribute to the *Apoſtle* the Reſidence of the *Conjurer*.

In a word, That *Simon Magus* might be at *Rome*, I will not much diſpute; ſince ſo many Tracks of his footſteps ſeem to have been viſible there theſe thouſand years or upwards; but that *Simon Peter* was there, I muſt crave leave to ſay, does not to me ſufficiently appear by this Argument.

The *fifth Reaſon*, Why we are to believe that *Peter* muſt needs be at *Rome*, is, Becauſe he was put to Death there: Which (they ſay) is evident enough from his *Sepulchre*, which was ſhewn there, and the *Pilgrimages* undertook by multitudes to viſit it, and by the Teſtimony of many Writers, who take the ſame for granted. *Bellarmine* 5th argument for *Peters* being at *Rome*.

1. This ſeems but a *Negromantic Logic*, the carcaſs only of an Argument in a matter of Faith, that is fetcht from *Tombs*, and rais'd I know not how, from *Cæmiteries*; a very *rambling Reaſon*, that depends meerly on *Pilgrimages*; 'tis nothing probable, if *Peter* were Crucified by that cruel Tyrant *Nero*, that the Chriſtians were al- *Anſw.*

towed at all (much leſs publickly) to Interr his Corps, or build him a ſumptuous Monument. For we find in *Euſebius*, l. 4. That the Chriſtians had very much ado to obtain the body of their Biſhop *Polycarpus*, which was refuſed them by the Heathens, thinking they would *make a God* thereof, and adore it; but the Chriſtians proteſted they did *Worſhip only and alone the true God.* The cuſtom of Worſhipping departed *Saints*, and *Pilgrimageing* to dead mens ſhrines, came up long after. And who knows but a *forged Story* might boulſter up an Idolatrous, or at leaſt Unlawful Superſtition? But as to this, you ſhall hear more in a ſubſequent Chapter.

2. However, could they evidently and beyond all contradiction demonſtrate that they have indeed St. *Peters* bones at *Rome*, yet this would be *no proof* that he was ever there in his Life-time, much leſs that he was the particular Biſhop of that Church; for nothing is more frequent amongſt them, than the Tranſlation of the bodies of Saints from one place to another, many hundred years after their Deceaſe. But as they have no Authentick evidence, that they have one *true Grain of that bleſſed Apoſtle's duſt*, ſo we are too well acquainted with their Art in Counterfeiting *Relicks*, and building glorious Shrines (for drawing together vain ſuperſtitious People, and bubbling them of their money) to credit them on their bare words about the Body of *Peter*, any more than concerning the *Head* of St. *John* Baptiſt, the *Milk*, the *Comb*, the *Scizzars*, and the *Travelling Chamber* of the Bleſſed Virgin, Cartloads of Chips of the *Croſs*, whereon our Saviour ſuffered, the Head of St. *Denis*, the *Bones* of St. *Urſula*, and her Eleven thouſand Virgins; The Heads of the three Wiſe-men of the *Eaſt* (whom they call the three Kings of *Cologn*) and a Thouſand more impoſtures daily boaſted of, viſited and worſhipped

ſhipped through ſeveral parts of the *Roman* Catholick World.

But they will perhaps urge, If *Peter* did not ſuffer Martyrdom at *Rome*, where died he? Touching the place of St. *Peters* Death.

To which I Reply.

1. What imports it if it be not known? Can they tell us where and when St. *Matthew*, St. *Jude*, and others of the Apoſtles died? Nay rather, as God concealed *Moſes's* Grave to prevent Idolatry, it may be the ſame Gracious Providence foreſeeing what a noiſe ſome people would make about St. *Peter*, left the latter ſtages of his Life, and place, time and circumſtances of his Death, purpoſely in the dark, to check ſuch preſumption.

2. St. *Chryſoſtom*, St. *Jerome*, *Nicholaus Lyranus*, and the Interlineary gloſs on that Text, *Matth.* 23. 24. *Behold I ſend unto you prophets, and wiſe men, and ſcribes*, [whereby thoſe Authors underſtood *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*] and ſome of them *ye* [that is, the People of *Jeruſalem*] *ſhall kill and crucify, and ſome ye ſhall ſcourge*, &c. do ſay, That St. *Peter* was Crucified *at Jeruſalem* (which may reaſonably be ſuppoſed after his return out of *Syria* or *Egypt*, if we credit *Nicephorus*) for otherwiſe there being none of the Apoſtles that ſuffered by way of Crucifixion there, that Prophecy ſhould not be fulfilled; the words of *Lyra* are theſe. Se alſo afterwards, *cb.* 3. *queſt.* 4.

—*Ex iis Occidetis ſicut Jacobum fratrem Johannis*, Acts 12. *& Stephanum*, Acts 7. *& Multos alios, & Crucifigetis ut* Petrum & Andræam. To which Teſtimony of that moſt Learned Man (who lived near 400 years ago) the Cardinal has nothing to ſay, but that *he ſpeaks unwarily*; but whether himſelf does not ſpeak full as unwarily and groundleſly, is ſtill a juſt queſtion. The rather, if we conſider, that *Joſephus* who lived and wrote at *Rome*,

and not only mentions the Death of St. *John* Baptiſt and Chriſt in *Judea*, but of many Chriſtians put to Death at *Rome* by *Nero*, yet takes no notice of *Peters* Crucifixion; which he was not likely to omit, if *Peter* had been then accounted the head of the Chriſtian Church, and did ſuffer at *Rome*. So that *Peter's* being at *Rome* and Crucified there, ſtill remains doubtful, and thoſe Authors that talk of it, ſeem all to follow the before mentioned *Papias*.

A fixth Argument.

There is yet another Argument urg'd by ſome *Romaniſts*, grounded on a Story related by *Platina* and others, *viz.* "That St. *Peter* endeavouring by night to make his "eſcape, and fly out of *Rome* for fear of Perſecution; "Chriſt perſonally met him, a mile out of Town, in "the *Appian* way, to whom *Peter* ſaying, *Lord whither* "*goeſt thou?* And Chriſt anſwering, *I come to* Rome a-"*gain to be Crucified*; *Peter* taking theſe words to be "meant of his own Martyrdom (as the Lord might "ſeem to ſuffer in his perſon) went back, and having "ſettled *Clement* to be his Succeſſor, was ſoon after ap-"prehended and Crucified; in which place of their meeting, where theſe words paſs'd, *Platina* tells us, there was in his time *a Chappel* Extant. And there is a Tradition too, that the *very print of their feet* as they two talkt together, was long after, (and for ought I know ſome may ſay, to this day) plainly to be ſeen.

Anſw.

As it ſuited not with the honour and zeal of Bleſſed St. *Peter*, (ſuppoſing him the proper Biſhop of *Rome*) to offer thus timorouſly to deſert and abandon his flock in time of Perſecution; ſo neither can the *Romaniſts* vouch any better Original Teſtimonies for the ſame, than either a Book in the Name of *Egeſippus*, which is acknowledged, and we doubt not but to prove it to be a Counterfeit; Or another aſcribed to *Linus*, the Author whereof,

whereof, whoever he was, *Baronius* himſelf terms *a fooliſh counterfeit Writer*; and conſequently all that follow or relate the Story after them, how numerous ſoever, are not to be regarded. And ſhould any Chriſtian give up himſelf to believe this Fable, (that Chriſt was ſo corporally there, as to leave the Impreſſion of his ſacred Feet) it were to make ſhipwrack of Faith; for by the Holy Ghoſt (and ſpeaking by the mouth of St. *Peter* too) it is expreſly declared, that the *Heavens ſhall contain our Lords Body till he come*, (to the laſt Judgment) *Acts* 3. 21.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Whether St. Peter *were* Bishop *of* Antioch, *or* Rome.

IF it cannot be sufficiently made appear, That St. *Peter* was *ever at Rome*, one would think we might superſede our pains of enquiring, Whether he were *Biſhop of Rome*. "No, ſaith *Bellarmin*, many have been
* *De Summ. Pontif.* l 2. "Biſhops of *Rome*, that never were at *Rome*, as *Clement* "the 5*th*, *John* the 22*th*, *Benedict* the 12*th*, *Clement* "the 6*th*, and *Innocent* the 6*th*, who being Ordained in "*France*, did always remain there.——How properly thoſe Gentlemen could be called *Biſhops of Rome*, that were neither choſen there, nor ever ſaw that City in their lives, I ſhall not inquire; nor repine at his *Holineſs* if he pleaſe to make *Titular Biſhops* of remote places in *Aſia* or *Africk*, where perhaps there may not be *one Chriſtian ſoul* living; or if he will gratifie his Favourites with Epiſcopal Sees in *Utopia* or *Fairy-land*; ſuch
* *De Offic: Ordin. C. Quoniam.* as *Panormitan** complains of, and calls *Epiſcopi Nullatenenſes*, Biſhops of *Nullatia*, Dioceſans of *No-land*. But this I am pretty confident of, That St. *Peter*, who ſo earneſtly exhorts Biſhops or Elders
‖ 2 Pet. 5.2. ‖ to *feed their Flocks*, would ſcarce ſet the firſt Pattern of *Non-reſidency* that ever was in the world. Nor do I ſee any neceſſity for calling *Clemens* the 5*th*, and the other *French* Popes, *Biſhops of Rome*, rather than Biſhops of *Avignion*; For
† *Cemer acenſis, Qu. Veſper. Art.* 3. I am taught by a very Learned *Roman* Catholick, † *That the Papacy and Biſhoprick of* Rome *are two diſtinct things, and not ſo neceſſarily conjoin'd but they may be ſeparated: As for example, If a Pope and a Council think it convenient, he may leave the Church of* Rome, *and unite himſelf*

to

to another Church; in which case the Church of Rome *should no longer be Head, nor have any Soveraignty over Christians.*

But letting that pass, we come now to consider the Arguments brought to prove *Peter's* being Bishop of the particular Church of *Rome*; and because they who affirm he was so, do with equal confidence maintain, That he was also Bishop of *Antioch* for about seven years, we will here take that part of the Story into our thoughts.

1. That *Peter* was an *Apostle*, no man that believes the New Testament can doubt; but that there is some difference between an Apostle and a *Bishop* properly so called, will, I think, not be denied: For the Apostles were immediately called by Christ, and all the World was their Diocess; for so runs their Commission, *Mark 16. 15. Go you into all the World, preach the Gospel to every Creature*; so that it was an *Extraordinary Office*, consisting of Personal Priviledges, as *Immediate Vocation, power to work Miracles, Universality of Jurisdiction*, and *Infallibility* in all things they preached or writ relating to the Gospel, being dictated unto, and specially guided by the Divine Spirit. But Bishops are chosen by *men*, and have a certain Seat and Church, and their Office is ordinary, 1 *Tim.* 3. 1. *Tit.* 1. 5. 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. Therefore *Peter* being an Apostle, could not, I conceive, be Bishop either of *Antioch* or *Rome* in the proper strict sense of the word, for this had been a kind of *Degrading* him from a superior and more *ample* Office, to one Inferior and Restrained.

A Difference between being an Apostle and Bishop of such a particular place.

I am not ignorant, That as the word Ἐπίσκοπος signifies at large an *Inspecter* or *Overseer*, every Apostle where ever he happen'd to come, might be said to be Bishop of that place (but not exclusively to others.)

And

And thus you may (if you please) call *Paul* a General
2 Cor. 11.28. Bishop, because he testifies, *That he had the care of all the Churches.* And in this respect we read of the *Episcopate of Judas*, Act. 1. 20. *His Bishoprick let another take*, [ἡν τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λαβοι ἑτερος,] and in such a sense St. *Peter* calls himself *Presbyter* or *Elder*, 1 Pet. 5. 1.

I also agree, that *Peter* or any other Apostle might, wherever he came, act and discharge all parts of a Bishops Function, whether *Ministerial* or *Governing*. But all this will not Constitute him proper Bishop of this or that particular Church, or of one more than another; for tho a Prince in his Progress may do some acts that belong to the Office of a *Mayor*, or other particular Governor of that Town, where he happens to lodg; yet it cannot be said that he is the Mayor or particular Governor of such a Corporation, for that would be a Diminution of his Royal Dignity; no more did the Apostles become *Local Bishops*, because of their exercising Episcopal Power in any particular Church by virtue of their Power Apostolical, wherein the other was included. Nor can the *first Planter* or Establisher of a Church as such, be stiled the *Bishop* of such a Church, for then both *Paul* and *Peter*, and all the rest of the Apostles must be *Bishops* of *many* several Dioceses.

Peter was not Ordained Bishop of any particular Church.

2. If *Peter* were Bishop either of *Antioch* or *Rome*, then either he must be *Ordain'd* such by *Christ*, or by *men* after Christ's Ascension; or else he constituted *himself* Bishop there: But nether of these three can be said.

Not the *first*, for as there appears no footsteps of such an Ordination in Scripture; so if by Christ he were Constituted President over any one particular Church, how could he share in that Command, *Go forth and*

and preach to every Nation? Nor were there before our Lords Aſcenſion any ſuch *Churches* in being.

Not the *ſecond*; for then he muſt relinquiſh the Apoſtolical Office, which he received of Chriſt, and ſuffer himſelf to be ſo far Degraded by men, as to undertake a meaner and more limited Office: As if the Biſhop of *London* ſhould be made *Parſon of Pancras.* Hence too, it would follow, That St. *Peter* thenceforth, inſtead of being Prince of the Apoſtles, ſhould as Biſhop of *Antioch* or *Rome* be inferior to the other Apoſtles, who were not *Ordained of men, nor by men*, Gal. 1.

Not the *third*; for no man *aſſumeth this honour to himſelf*, Heb. 5. 4. *Peter* or any other Apoſtle might Ordain *others* to be Biſhops in ſuch places as needed them: But that they ſhould or would Create *themſelves* Biſhops of this or that Peculiar Church, we have no Ground to believe: By what Words, what Rites, what Ceremonies did they do it? Or how, when, where, did *Peter* declare himſelf to be the proper Biſhop either of *Antioch* or *Rome?*

Is it not utterly incredible, That *Peter* the Supream Head and Monarch of the Church on Earth (as they pretend) ſhould for thirty two years be Biſhop, and have the particular Charge and Cure of Two of the greateſt Cities in the *Roman* Empire, and that too, whilſt moſt of the other Apoſtles were living, and yet none of them (nor he himſelf) in any of their Writings ſhould ſay one ſyllable of it, nor mention ſo much as one *ſingle Epiſcopal Act* done by him in either of thoſe Cities in all that time? No, nor St. *Luke* in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, nor St. *Paul* who lived long in *Antioch*, and longer at *Rome*, and had opportunity, nay (had it been true) we may ſay a kind of neceſſity to have mentioned it.

Peter more likely to be Bishop of *Jerusalem*, than of *Antioch* or *Rome*.

I confess, were it pretended, that *Peter* had been *Bishop of Jerusalem*, it might seem somewhat probable; for as he is stiled the *Apostle of the Circumcision*; so 'tis apparent from Scripture, that he took much pains, and spent several years in Preaching there, and in the neighbouring Territories; and if he were the chief, or most notable of the Apostles, and they were all to have several and respective Bishopricks, since *that* of *Jerusalem* was the first and *Mother Church*, from whence the Gospel was spread abroad into all the Earth; (other Churches being but as so many Colonies derived from thence) 'twas reasonable he should have the conduct *thereof*, and be Bishop of the first that was planted in the World; but there appears nothing so much colour of Reason to call him *Bishop* either of *Antioch* or *Rome*.

For as the Gospel was first Preached at *Antioch* by some of the scattered Believers from *Jerusalem*, and further advanc'd by *Barnabas*, and afterwards more fully Established there by *Paul*, who both labour'd there for one whole year, and with Eminent success; insomuch that the Disciples were first called Christians at *Antioch*, Acts 11. It might thence seem reasonable, to Intitle one of them to *that Bishoprick*; but to assign *Peter* thereto, is to make him *build on other mens foundations*, and to *reap where he had not sown*; especially since we find no Intimation of his ever being there, save *once* mentioned by the by, and then so far from acting as Bishop there, that he seems not throughly to have understood the state and usages of that Church, but was withstood and rebuked by St. *Paul*, *Gal.* 2. 11.

When *Barnabas* and *Paul* had planted so flourishing a Church at *Antioch*, would *Peter* meerly to shew his *power*, thrust himself in to be *Bishop* there? Or if he did, why would he leave it and go to *Rome*? Was it be-

cause

cauſe the latter was the Richer, the larger and the more Honourable? So indeed *Platina* (as you heard) ſeems to intimate, ſaying, that it was becauſe that *Imperial City was more ſuitable to his pontifical Dignity.* But certainly *Peter*, who heard Chriſt telling him, amongſt the other Diſciples, when they began to vye for ſuperiority, that *it ſhould not be ſo amongſt them*; and who himſelf charges the Miniſters of the Goſpel, not to *carry it as Lords over the Flock committed to their charge*, could not ſo quickly forget *both*, and abandon that Humility ſo much recommended by his Maſter and himſelf, to ſeek out a ſplendid place to be Biſhop of, that thereby he and his *Succeſſors* might ſeem great in the World.

Suppoſe *Peter* once Biſhop of *Antioch*, how could he *Tranſlate* his See from thence to *Rome*, unleſs he were removed by ſome *Order* or Miſſion of the reſt of the Apoſtles, or elſe that he himſelf had ſome ſpecial Viſion or Revelation ſo to do? But neither of theſe are as yet proved, nor ſo much as attempted. *Oſius* Biſhop of *Corduba* (one of no ſmall account amongſt the 318 Fathers of the firſt Council of *Nice*) in the Council at *Sardis*, held about the year 340, did Declare, That *it was not Lawful for a Biſhop to leave his City, and undertake another; for thereby it would appear that he was inflam'd with Covetouſneſs, or a ſlave to Ambition, that he might domineer*, which was Synodically by the word *Placet*, agreed unto by all the Fathers.

This was likewiſe the ſenſe of ſeveral other Councils, * and that all the Acts of ſuch a Biſhop at the ſecond place, ſhould be accounted *Null and Void*, and he *Remanded back to his former Church.* Theſe being the ſentiments of thoſe Ancient Fathers, certainly if *Peter* had removed his See from *Antioch* to *Rome*, they would out of Reverence to the Prince of the Apoſtles, have ſuſpended

* Con. Nic. Can. 15. 16. Conc. *Antioch.* Can. 21. 22. Conc. Chalcedon. Can. 10.

ſpended their Opinions in the Caſe. If Councils are *Infallible* in their Decrees, then it appears *Peter* being once Biſhop of *Antioch*, did an ill act in Tranſlating himſelf to *Rome*; if *Peter* did *well* in Tranſlating his See from *Antioch* to *Rome*, as being the much greater and Imperial City, then theſe Councils were *Raſh*, and did Err in ſuch their General Condemnations of the like Removes; ſo that either way, the Authority of *Peter*, or that of Councils, muſt be Impaired.

Bellarmin indeed tells us, That *Peters* Remove from *Antioch* to *Rome*, was *Jubente Domino*, *by the Lords Command*; but offers no kind of proof of that Command, when yet all the ſtrength of his Argument to Confirm the Supremacy of the *Roman* Chair, muſt depend thereon. Let them but ſhew that Divine Command for *Peters* fixing his Epiſcopal Chair at *Rome*, and it will put an end not only to *this*, but divers other Controverſies; we will then readily obey our bleſſed Lords Command, and the Popes too; but they cannot produce any ſuch Command, nay confeſs that there is none, *Nullum Chriſti ea de re Decretum Extat*, *no Decree of Chriſt is extant about that matter*, ſays *Cornelius* a *Lapide*, in *Apoc.* 17. *v.* 17.

Object. If it be alledged, That the *Fact of the Apoſtle does argue Gods command* as its precedent Cauſe, and they ſhall urge, That *Peter* did remove to *Rome*; But *Peter* was *Inſpired* by the Holy Ghoſt, Therefore we ought to believe that this Tranſlation of his ſeat was by the ſpecial Dictates or Guidance of the ſpirit.

I anſwer,

Anſw. 1. This Argument has no place nor force until ſuch time as they have ſubſtantially proved the fact it ſelf, that is, That Peter *did remove from* Antioch *to* Rome, and with an intent to eſtabliſh at the latter place, the ſeat

ſeat of Eccleſiaſtick Empire; but this cannot at all be proved, or at leaſt as yet is not.

2. Cardinal *Bellarmin* of all men, ought not however be allow'd to plead this; for in his Treatiſe *De Verbo Dei*, L. 4. C. 4. he ſticks not to *deny*, That *Peter*, *Paul*, *or other of the ſacred Penmen wrote the Holy Scriptures by Gods ſpecial command*: And will the ſame man, without any proof, obtrude on us a Command of God for placing *Peter's* Chair at *Rome*? Juſtly may we retort his own words (*Mutatis mutandis*) in the place laſt cited. "If "it had been the purpoſe of Chriſt and *Peter* to place the "ſeat of Chriſtian Empire, or viſible Headſhip of the "whole Church, at *Rome*, undoubtedly, it being a thing "of ſuch moment, Chriſt would have commanded it, "and *Peter* would ſomewhere have witneſſed, That he "by the Lords command fixed his ſeat there; But this "we no where read, no not ſo much as one word, that "he ever was at *Rome*, or had any thing to do there; Therefore we are not bound to believe it.

Euſebius's Chronicon is commonly cited to prove *Peter* was Biſhop of *Antioch* ſeven years, and of *Rome* Twenty five years. Now *Euſebius* does there indeed ſay, That *Peter founded the Church of Antioch* (which yet is plainly contrary to Scripture) but ſo far is he from ſaying, That he was Seven years Biſhop there, That he expreſly tells us, *Euodius was its firſt Biſhop*. And ſo far likewiſe from affirming that St. *Peter* was Twenty five years Biſhop of *Rome*, that he does not ſay he was *Biſhop of* Rome *at all*; but only, that *Peter* having firſt founded the Church of *Antioch*, *went to* Rome *to Preach the Goſpel*. *Peter's* being Biſhop of *Rome* Twenty five years is none of *Euſebius's* Teſtimony, there being not a Syllable to that purpoſe in the Original *Greek* (in which Language he wrote) but thoſe words were ſoiſted into the

Euſebius abuſed to colour *Peter's* being Biſhop of *Rome*.

the *Latin* Copies, which are very much Interpolated and corrupted, as may be seen by *Scaliger*'s Animadversions. Hence that Learned *Roman* Catholick *Valesius* * publickly acknowledges —— *Sciendum est Eusebium Apostoles in Ordine Episcoporum minime Numerare*, That *Eusebius did not rank the Apostles in the Order of Bishops.*

* In Not. ad *Euseb.* l. 3. c. 21.

Nay 'tis plain that those Ancients who speak of *Peter*'s being Bishop of *Rome*, do use the word Bishop in a large sense, to imply that during his abode there (which upon *Papias*'s conjecture and vulgar fame they supposed) he Preach'd unto, and took care of that Church: For the same persons do no less affirm, That *Paul* also was *Bishop of the same Church at the same time*, which cannot be understood but in such a *large sense* as aforesaid. Hence *Ruffinus* says * *Linus & Cletus fuerunt ante Clementem Episcopi in Urbe Roma, sed superstite Petro, videlicet ut illi Episcopatus Curam Gererent, iste vero Apostolatus Impleret Officium* — Linus *and* Cletus *were Bishops in the City of* Rome *before* Clement, *but whilst* Peter *was yet alive, They performing the duty of Bishops, and He attending to the Office Apostolical.* In which words, tho he (who flourisht towards the end of the 4*th* Century) takes for granted *Peter*'s being at *Rome*, yet he plainly distinguishes the *Apostolical* and *Episcopal* Offices, and refers them not to *one*, but several persons, and so denies that *Peter* was ever Bishop of *Rome*, naming two others who govern'd that Church in that capacity during his life time.

* Præfat. Recogn. *Clement.* ad Gaudent.

To what purpose should *Peter* be a Bishop.

Let us consider *Cui Bono?* to what purpose serves this Assignment of a fictitious *Episcopacy* to *Peter?* Whatever Priviledges could attend his person, were bestowed upon him either as a *Believing Disciple* of Christ, or as an *Apostle*. As such the *Keys of the kingdom of Heaven* were given unto him. As such he was commanded to *feed the flock of Christ*; as such Christ promised to *build*

the

the Church on the Faith he profeſſed; as an Apoſtle he (with the reſt) had the care *of all Churches* (that is, as far as every one was able) committed unto him; As an Apoſtle he was *Divinely inſpired* and enabled infallibly to reveal the mind of Chriſt: Now, all theſe things belonging to him as a Believer and Apoſtle, I deſire to know what further Priviledg could accrue to him beſides, as Biſhop of any particular place, were it either *Antioch* or *Rome*? If the *Romaniſts* will ſhew us any body ſucceeding *Peter* in the enjoyment of thoſe extraordinary Priviledges before mentioned, they muſt beſpeak ſuch perſon to ſucceed him in his *Apoſtleſhip*, and not in his pretended *Biſhoprick*: For whatever Authority, Power or Juriſdiction *Peter* had over all Churches in the World, or whatever unerring Judgment in matters of Faith, the ſame belonged unto him as he was an *Apoſtle*, long before he is fancied to have been the Biſhop of any particular place; ſo that if it were neceſſary that ſome one ſhould ſucceed *Peter* in his *Epiſcopacy*, Why not much more neceſſary in his *Apoſtleſhip*? And then why was it not needful that *Paul* ſhould have a *Succeſſor* as well as *Peter*? and *John* the ſurvivor of all the reſt of the Apoſtles, as well as any of them?

Again, If we muſt believe the Biſhop of *Rome* to be *Peter's* Succeſſor, it will, I hope, not be unlawful to enquire *wherein*? And therefore I demand,

I. Doth the Pope ſucceed St. *Peter* in all that he had in Commiſſion, and was empowered to do in reference unto the Church of God? Doth he ſucceed him in the *manner of his Call* to his Office? *Peter* was called *immediately* by Chriſt in his own perſon; The Pope is Elected by the Conclave of *Cardinals*, concerning whom, their Office, Priviledges, Power and Right, to chooſe the Succeſſor of St. *Peter*, there

there is not one ſyllable, either in Scripture, or any Monuments of pure Antiquity for divers hundred years; and how many times the Cardinals have been Influenc'd by powerful *Strumpets*, *Baronius* himſelf has inform'd us; and how much in latter Ages to this day, *the Factions* of ſeveral Princes prevail, cannot be unknown to any that is not a ſtranger to Hiſtory, and the Modern Tranſactions of the World.

2. Doth the Pope Succeed *Peter* in the way and manner of his perſonal *Diſcharge* of his Office and imployment? Not in the leaſt: For *Peter* in the purſuit of his Commiſſion and Obedience unto the Command of his Lord, travel'd to and fro Preaching the Goſpel, and planting and watering the Churches of Chriſt in Patience, Self-denial, Humility, Zeal, Temperance and Meekneſs; whereas the Pope Reigns at *Rome* in eaſe, exalting himſelf above *Kings*, and without taking the leaſt pains in his own perſon for the Converſion of Sinners, or edification of the Diſciples of Chriſt.

3. Doth every Pope or Biſhop of *Rome* ſucceed *Peter* in his *perſonal qualifications*, which were of ſuch extraordinary advantage to the Church of God in his days, *viz.* His *Faith*, *Love*, *Holineſs*, *Light* and *Knowledg*? This cannot with any modeſty be alledged, ſince the beſt Hiſtorians of the *Roman* Caſt, confeſs many Popes to have been groſly *Ignorant*, and flagitiouſly *Wicked*.

4. Doth the Pope ſucceed *Peter* in the way and manner of Exerciſing his Care and Authority towards the Churches of Chriſt? As little as in any of the reſt: For *Peter* did it by his *Prayers* for the Churches, by his *perſonal Viſitation* and Inſtruction of them,

by

by his *Writings* Divinely inſpired for their direction and guidance according to the Will of God. But the Pope proceeds by *Bulls* and *Conſiſtorial Determinations*, executed by *Intricate Proceſſes* and Officers, unknown not only to *Peter*, but all Antiquity; and whoſe Ways, Orders, Terms and Practices St. *Peter* himſelf, were he here again upon Earth, would as little underſtand, as approve.

5. Doth the Pope ſucceed *Peter* in his perſonal *Infallibility*? Let the *Romaniſts* agree, if they can, amongſt themſelves upon an Anſwer to this Queſtion. Or doth he ſucceed him in his power of working *Miracles*? I do not hear that his *preſent Holineſs* pretends to that Talent, tho Pope *Gregory* 7. ſeems to have had ſome inclinations that way, when he was wont to ſcare the people by *ſhaking fire out of his ſleeve*, as Cardinal *Benno* relates the Story.

Laſtly, Doth the Pope ſucceed *Peter* in the *Doctrine* that he taught? It hath been prov'd a Thouſand times (and we are ready when ever call'd upon, to demonſtrate it again) That he doth not, but hath *added* to, *detracted* from, and many ways *perverted* it.

Wherein then doth *this Succeſſion* of the Pope to *Peter*, which they talk ſo much of, conſiſt? Why, in his Power, Authority, Juriſdiction and Supremacy over the whole Church; In the Eccleſiaſtical Monarchy, with the ſecular Advantages of Riches, Honour and Pomp that attend it. An excellent contrivance! In the things that *Peter* really enjoy'd, and which were of ſingular advantage to the Church of God, the Popes diſclaim, or dare not pretend any Succeſſion unto him; but fix it on things wherein he was no way concern'd, but which vaſtly make for their own worldly Intereſt. On this *ſuppoſititious Anvil*

do they forge out to themſelves a Monarchy *direct* and abſolute in Eccleſiaſtical things over the whole Church; *Indirect* at leaſt, and *in Ordine ad Spiritualia*, over the whole World. And this is the great *Diana*, in making of Shrines for which, the main buſineſs and livelihood of many Thouſands of their inferiour *Craftſmen* does conſiſt.

Whence the Dignity of the Church of *Rome*,

But ſtill to prove *Peter's* being Biſhop of *Rome*, the Cardinal argues from the *Dignity of the Roman Church*; which (ſaith he) was *ever accounted the chiefeſt of all others; But there can be no other Reaſon why it ſhould be ſo, but becauſe St.* Peter *the Prince of the Apoſtles was the proper Paſtor and Biſhop of that Church*; Bellarm. de Rom. Pontif. l. 2. c. 4.

For Anſwer to which, be pleaſed to obſerve,

1. What a pretty *Circle* is here; The Church of *Rome* is the chief of all Churches, becauſe St. *Peter* was its Biſhop; But how does it appear, that St. *Peter* was its Biſhop? Becauſe *Rome* is the chief of all Churches—— *Riſum teneatis?*

2. As the calling *Peter*, *Prince of the Apoſtles*, is but a Complement (For tho ſome of the fourth Century call him ſo, yet they explain themſelves to mean thereby ὁ πρῶτος, the *firſt* or *chief* in Order, as a Chairman or Speaker, but not ὁ Ἄρχοντα, the *Prince* or *Ruler*; And when the Ambiguity of the Word began to be abuſed unto pretenſions of Preeminence, the *Council of Carthage* expreſly condemn'd it, allowing none to be called *Princeps ſacerdotum*, *the Prince of Prieſts*) ſo neither is it true, That *Rome* was always accounted the chief of all Churches; for *Jeruſalem* was the Mother Church, planted by our Saviour in perſon, and his Twelve Apoſtles, with whom were the Seventy Diſciples, ſuch Teachers as no other Church ever had at once; and from thence the Goſpel

was

was propagated to the rest of the World, and to *Rome it self*. The Church of *Corinth* is celebrated in Scripture for being *enriched with all Utterance, and all knowledg, and for coming behind in no Gift*, 1 Cor. 1. 5, and 7. The Church of the *Ephesians* (for I think that place may much more justly be restrained to that particular Church, than it can be applied to the *Roman*, which we often see done) is called, *The Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, 1 Tim. 3. 15. The Church of the *Thessalonians* is commended for *following the Churches of Judea* [not that of *Rome*, tho the Epistle was wrote from thence] 1 *Thess.* 2. 14. 'Tis true the Primitive Church of *Rome* wants not its praises too; For St. *Paul* saith, That their *Faith was spoken of throughout the whole World*, Rom. 1. 8. That is, was taken notice of in places far distant; but this was because *Rome* was the chief City of the Empire, to which strangers from all parts did dayly (upon secular occasions) resort. Their Faith was *the same* that was in all Nations; amongst (not *above*) *whom are ye also*, Rom. 1. 5, and 6. But what is this commendation of their Faith *then*, to the Church of *Rome* in after times, when they might be declined therein; for that 'twas not impossible for the Church of *Rome* totally *to fall away by unbelief*, we learn from the same Apostle, *Ch.* 11. 20. And therefore he admonishes them *not to be high-minded, but fear.*

3. In the next Ages there was no such extraordinary account of the *Roman* Church; its Bishop by the most Ancient Fathers is stiled no more than *Brother*, *Collegue* or *Fellow-Bishop*, as is evident in the Epistles of St. *Cyprian*; Appeals to *Rome* were forbid by several Councils. * *Irenæus* Bishop of *Lions*, one of the earliest of the Fathers (for he flourisht before the year 200) sharply reproved *Victor* Bishop of *Rome*, because he went about

* Conc. Nic. c. 5. Conc. Melevit. c. 22.

to excommunicate the Eastern Churches for not keeping of *Easter* after the same manner he did † St. *Hieron* allows him no such superiority; *Quicunque fuerit Episcopus sive Romæ sive alibi, ejusdem est Meriti & Sacerdotii* * whosoever (saith he) *shall be a Bishop, whether of* Rome, *or elsewhere, is of the same worth, the same Priesthood:* Nay, we have the Testimony of one that was afterwards *a Pope himself*, I mean *Æneas Sylvius* ‖ who confesses, *That before the Council of* Nice, *Every Church kept to it self, and there was but little respect paid to the Church of* Rome. And as its esteem at first began not on the account of *Peter*, but because it was the *Imperial City*, for so says the Council of *Chalcedon* (held *Ann.* 451.) Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο, &c. *Because old* Rome *was the Imperial City, Therefore the Fathers have rightly given Priviledges to that See.* So the Reverence and Vogue of Jurisdiction it afterwards obtain'd, was by the *favour* of the Emperors; and especially from the *Artifices* of its Bishops, improving all advantages, and making use of many very *Carnal* means, very well known, and therefore not necessary here to be recounted.

† Vid. Euseb. l. 5. c. 24.

* *Hier.* ad Evagrium.

‖ Epistol. l. 1.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Antient Authors *alledged for* Peter's *being Biſhop of* Rome, *conſidered*; *as* Papias, Linus, Egeſippus, *the* Decretal Epiſtles, *&c. Forgeries in the name of Antiquity detected*; *particularly a feigned Decretal Epiſtle from* Clemens *to St.* James, *and another from Pope* Cornelius *about removing* Peter's *Body. A remarkable Teſtimony from* Baronius.

ALthough I have gone through Cardinal *Bellarmin*'s ſpecial Arguments (and all that I know of, produceible by any of the Romaniſts) for proving *Peter* to have been Biſhop of *Rome*, or at any time there; and have briefly ſhewn (as I think) that *none* of them are free from juſt *Exceptions*, nor *all conjoyn'd* of ſufficient weight to oblige a rational mans aſſent, much leſs ſuch a firm and ſteady Belief as is requiſite in a matter ſo highly concerning *Religion* as this is ſuppoſed to be; yet ſince both *he* and others cite many pretended Antient Authors, as giving *Suffrages* in favour of their aſſertion, I hold it not unfit to inform the *unlearned* Reader (whom ſuch a *ſpecious Parade* may poſſibly amuſe) ſomewhat more particularly concerning the ſame.

1. This Teſtimony, were it never ſo numerous, is ſtill but *Humane*, and ſo cannot (I conceive) be a ſufficient ground for any Article of Faith.

2. That although we do ſeriouſly pay a juſt Reverence to *Antiquity*, yet ſtill we hold our ſelves obliged in Diſcretion to put a difference between *pure* and counterfeit Records, not to ſuffer our ſelves to be betrayed into an unwary prejudicial Confederacy with a parcel of

of neighbouring *upstart Gibeonites* meerly for their shewing us *mouldy Bread* and *clouted Shooes* of their own contrivance: He must be too much a stranger to Ecclesiastical History to be discourſed withal about these matters, who knows not, that soon after the Decease of the Apostles, there were counterfeit *Gospels*, *Acts*, *Epistles*, *Revelations*, &c. put forth in the names of the Apostles, or as received from them by Tradition, which are pointed at by *Irenæus*, and said to be condemn'd in a Roman Council by *Gelasius*, An. Chr. 494. The *Itinerary* of *Clement*, and the Book called *Pastor*, a Book called the *Gospel of St.* Peter, and another Intituled *his Acts*, being some of them. More particularly St. *Jerom* * mentions five Books that in his time were abroad under the name of St. *Peter*, *viz.* one Intituled, the *Acts* of St. *Peter*, another, St. *Peter's Gospel*, the third concerning *Preaching*, the fourth St. *Peter's Revelations*, and the fifth a *Book of Judgment*---All which he owns to be *Apocryphal*. And *Eusebius* tells of a long tedious *Disputation* between *Peter* and *Apion* far different from Apostolical Purity and simplicity; which (saith he) *came forth but yesterday under St.* Clement's *Name*, *never once heard of in former Ages*. Nor is there scarce any thing more frequent in the Fathers, than complaints of *supposititious* Books, *Interpolations* and *Forgeries* made in their Works, or those of their Ancestors, by Hereticks of one sort or other. Thus *Dionysius* of *Corinth* in *Eusebius* * bewails, That the *Apostles* (Messengers or Agents) *of Satan had sown Tares in his Epistles, omitting some things, and adding others*. And hence it is, that many Books wearing the Names of Orthodox Fathers, and inserted in their Works, are even by the most Learned of the *Romanists* themselves confess'd not to have been Penn'd by those to whom they are attributed, but foisted in under their Names.

Many Counterfeits under pretence of Antiquity.

* In Catalog.

* Lib 4 Ca. 22.

Since

(Since therefore such *ill practices* were rife ſo early, We muſt not take all for *Gold* that Gliſters with the Gloſs of Antiquity; but make uſe of the *Touchſtone* of Judgment to diſtinguiſh between Adulterate and Genuine Records. If there were then people of ſo much *Confidence* and ſo little *Conſcience*, as to forge ſo many falſe *Books* in St. *Peter's* Name, and Father their own Dreams on that Bleſſed Apoſtle, much more credible it is, That falſe Reports and Rumours (which in time gain'd the venerable Name of *Traditions*, eſpecially amongſt thoſe whoſe intereſt it was to promote them) might be ſpread touching the parts wherein he Preached and Reſided, the place, time and other circumſtances of his *Death*, &c. Nor is this a *bare ſuppoſition*, or probability only, but, *de facto*, true: For all the Authors vouch'd in this Diſpute by the *Romaniſts*, may be reduced to three Ranks; 1. Some that are of very *doubtful credit*. 2. Others that are *known forgeries*, and ſtigmatiz'd counterfeits. 3. Certain expreſſions of ſome of the *Fathers*, who living at a conſiderable diſtance of time, might by *Hear-ſay* take it upon Truſt, without ever examining the matter, That St. *Peter* ſuffer'd at *Rome*, and conſequently accomodating their Language to the popular vogue, call *Rome* St. *Peter's Chair*.

Touching the laſt, We ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak ſomewhat further towards the cloſe of this whole Diſcourſe. Of the other *two* we ſhall treat jointly in this Chapter; Wherein it will concern us chiefly to enquire into the firſt and *Original Authors* of this Opinion, and if we can evince, That they are not *Teſtes probi & Idonei, of good and ſufficient Credit*, It will not be difficult to determine, what ſentiments we ought to have for the Teſtimonies of *ſuch* as innocently (but unwarily) might follow them.

The

The most Ancient Authors (or such pretended) which I find produced, are, 1. A Book in the Name of *Linus*. 2. The Report or Opinion of *Papias*. 3. *Egesippus*. 4. The *Decretal* Epistles.

Of *Linus*.

As for the *first*, (which I place so, because I suppose they would have it believ'd to be wrote by *Linus*, whom some of them pretend to be *Peter's* next and immediate Successor) it is intituled *de passione Petri & Pauli*; and was first publish'd (if I mistake not) in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*); But whoever peruses it, cannot but judg it a *vain Romance* full of Fictions; and as it was unknown to the Ancients, so 'tis censur'd by the ablest *Romanists* themselves * to be *a Counterfeit*: And therefore I think I need say no more of it.

* Baron. ad Annum 44. N. 43. & Annum. 60. N. 6, Possev. in Appar. *V. Linus.*

Of *Papias*.

Papias is *Davus in Fabula*, A Voucher brought in at every turn in this Case by *Bellarmin* as you have heard; and as those that make use of *Knights of the Post*, always take care to put good Cloaths on their backs, the *Romanists* will tell us, He was a most *Pious Learned Man*, a Disciple of St. *John* the Evangelist, and some of their Chronologers place him in the first Century. Nor will this Comparison (I hope) be thought too *severe* and unbecoming, when the judicious Reader shall have considered the following just Animadversions, wherein we shall make it appear, both that there has been gross *Forgery* committed to inhance the credit of this *Papias*, and that he was indeed a person whose Judgment or Testimony ought to be but of very little value.

First then, be it observ'd, That in the latter Editions and Translations of *Eusebius*, there is an high Character given of *Papias*——*At the same time* (says *Eusebius*, as *Valesius* renders him) *Papias was famous, a Man very Eloquent and Learned, well skill'd in the Scriptures. Christopherson* in his Translation, adds further beyond the Text,

Text, That he was a perſon *moſt excellently skill'd in the knowledg of all other Arts*---But the Truth is, all this commendation of *Papias* is a *Forgery*; *Euſebius* is corrupted, and theſe Encomiums (by I know not whom, but we may gueſs for *what end*) ſhuffled into the Text long after *Euſebius* was dead; which I prove by the following Reaſons:

1. *Ruffinus* who tranſlated *Euſebius* above 1200 years ago in that place, has only this ——*About theſe times flouriſhed* Polycarp *Biſhop of* Smyrna, *and* Papias *of* Hieropolis---giving us not one word of that praiſe of him, which is now extant in *Euſebius*; whence we juſtly conclude that anciently it was not there, ſince no Reaſon can be Aſſigned why *Ruffinus* ſhould omit it.
2. *Valeſius*, a very Learned *Roman* Catholick, who laſt publiſh'd *Euſebius*, confeſſes, that of 3 or 4 *Greek* Manuſcripts of *Euſebius*, which he made uſe of in his Edition, not any of them had that commendation of *Papias*: And therefore he doubts not, but thoſe words were added by ſome *Ignorant Scholiaſt contrary to the Judgment and ſenſe of* Euſebius [*Non dubito quin hæc verba ab Imperito Scholiaſte adjecta ſunt præter Euſebii mentem & ſententiam*----Valeſ. in Not. ad L. 3. *Euſeb.* ca. 36.] For.
3. The Addition of theſe Words (as the ſame Learned man obſerves) makes *Euſebius* write *Nonſence* and contradict himſelf, by calling *Papias* a *moſt Learned* man, and *moſt skill'd in the Scriptures*; of whom in the ſame Book, he ſays, That he was a *Rude and ſimple perſon*, of very *little wit* and judgment, &c. of which he gives ſeveral Inſtances: So much for the Forgery.

2. Our ſecond Obſervation touching *Papias*, ſhall be, That he is ſaid to have been a friend to, or familiar with *Polycarpus*; * But *Polycarpus* according to *Baronius*, ſuffer'd Martyrdom in the year of our Lord 167. † And the ſame *Baronius* places *Peter's* Martyrdom, *Anno Chr.* 69. So that *Papias* muſt

* *Euſeb.* l. 3. c. 39.
† *Baron.* Mart. ad diem Jan. 26.

must flouriſh near 100 *years after Peter's* Death, a diſtance long enough in thoſe times when ſo many *falſe things* were bruited abroad touching the Apoſtles Acts and Sufferings, for one that dwelt at a great diſtance of place, and took his Information but upon Hear-ſay to be deceived.

3. Since none of *Papias's* Books are Extant, whereby we might be enabled to judg of the man by his *own Works*, it will be requiſite to remark what Character *Euſebius*, who brings him on the Stage, gives of him; which in brief is this-- "That he was one that neither *heard* nor *ſaw* any of the "Apoſtles, but received what he heard from their *followers*, "as *Ariſto* and *John* (not the Apoſtle, but) a certain Elder. "That he thought he could not benefit ſo much by reading "the *Scriptures* as by Conference with men that had been "*acquainted* with the Authors of them. That he was ſo "little acquainted with the Scriptures, that he miſtook *that* "*Philip* whoſe Daughters were Propheteſſes, to be *Philip* the "Apoſtle [when the Text, had he read or remembred it expreſly, ſays, It was *Philip* the Deacon] "That he had, by ſuch "Traditions, ſtrange Parables and Preachings of our Bleſſed "Saviour, and other things very *Fabulous*; amongſt the reſt "advanc'd the Hereſy of the *Millenaries*; and that he fell "into thoſe Errors through Ignorance, and not underſtanding aright thoſe Narrations that were told him as from the "Apoſtles; That he Expounded a certain Hiſtory of a "Woman accuſed before Chriſt of many crimes written in "the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews* [which was a counterfeit]. In fine, That he was a man of *little wit*, or ſmall "judgment, as appear'd by his Books; yet gave unto divers Eccleſiaſtical Writers occaſion of Error, who reſpected his Antiquity, ſee *Euſeb.* l. 3. c. 22. 35, 39. and *Nicephorus* l. 3. c. 20.

Here you have both the *Genius* or Humor of the Man, eaſy to be impoſed upon, taking up things by Hear-ſay; one that was not aſham'd to own, That he thought hearing

Oral

Oral Tradition more profitable than Reading the *Scriptures*, that is, That to hearken to the Stories and *Tales* of private *fallible* perſons (in matters of Religion) was more beneficial than to ſtudy the *Sacred Oracles* of God penn'd by Divinely inſpired infallible perſons, and able to make the *man of God perfect in all good works*; one of ſmall judgment, and who embrac'd Fables, Hereſies and Counterfeit Goſpels: As alſo you are told the *bad effects* of all this, *viz.* That he miſled many ſubſequent Eccleſiaſtical Authors into Error, paying too great a reverence to his Antiquity, without due enquiry into the Truth of his Aſſertions, or Examination of the Grounds whereon he delivered them.

Now ſince ſuch a perſon was the firſt that *inſinuated Peter*'s being at *Rome* (for I do not find that he plainly *affirm'd* it (much leſs that *Peter* was Biſhop there) only inferr'd it by interpreting *Babylon* in St. *Peter*'s Epiſtle to ſignify *Rome*) if, I ſay, *ſuch an one* were the firſt (as for ought appears he was) that ever intimated any ſuch thing, how far either his *Talk*, or that of thoſe that *relate it after him*, is to be valued, I leave the intelligent Reader to judg; ſince nothing is more common in *Hiſtories*, than for the miſtake of *one* to draw others into error; and that this *Papias* actually did miſlead many, we have the home Teſtimony of *Euſebius* before recited; and why not in this buſineſs of *Peter's being at* Rome, as well as in that of the *Millenary* Reign, *&c.*? Nay rather in the *former* than the *latter*, ſince good innocent men were more like to ſwallow this report of an indifferent *matter of fact* (as they could not but apprehend this of *Peter*'s Writing from *Rome*, to be, not imagining what fine conſequences after-times would thence derive) than to entertain a *Doctrinal point* without Examination, and to be more eaſily inveigled into a miſtake in Hiſtory, than into *Hereſy*; for under no better figure was that opinion of the *Chiliaſts*, look'd upon in ſucceeding Ages, tho for ſome time on the credit of the ſaid *Papias* receiv'd (or at leaſt unop-

poſed) by not a few Fathers of the Church. So much concerning *Papias*, who (for ought I know) might in the main be a very honeſt *well-meaning man*, though miſled by unwarrantable reports, and a Zeal not according to knowledge. Nor ſhould I thus have repeated his Failures (which I charitably hope God has forgiven) did not the importunity of ſome People, vapouring with his *Name* and Authority, render theſe Reflections neceſſary.

Of *Egeſippus.*

As for *Egeſippus*, when he lived is doubtful, ſome ſay about the Year 101. others 145. others 170. but this is certain, That *what* we have now abroad in his Name, could not be wrote by the ſame Perſon whom *Euſebius* mentions *l.* 4. *c.* 8. For whereas he is ſaid to have gathered his Books out of the Goſpel *ſecundum Hebræos* [the beſt of their Vouchers you ſee followed counterfeit Goſpels] and wrote Commentaries of the Doctrine and Acts of the Apoſtles, and that too in a *plain homely ſtile*, as St. *Hierom* notes; this counterfeit *Egeſippus* affects a very *loſty Phraſe*, and affords us only five Books of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, out of *Joſephus*; and particularly makes mention of the City of *Conſtantinople*, a name not known in the World till the great *Conſtantine*, who, beginning to Reign (alone) but in the Year 327. cauſed *Byzantium* to be called ſo; therefore the Writer thereof, whoever he was, muſt of neceſſity live near 200 Years, if not much more, after that good man in whoſe name they would obtrude it.

Of the Decretal Epiſtles.

We come now to the *decretal Epiſtles*; and indeed were theſe Genuine, they would not only diſpatch the Buſineſs of St. *Peter's* being Biſhop of *Rome*, but of the Popes Supremacy too, and many other of their modern *Articles of Faith.* But touching ſuch *Epiſtles*, we ſhall briefly obſerve; 1. What they are, and when, and by whom firſt Midwiv'd into the World. 2. Offer Reaſons demonſtrating (as I apprehend) that they are generally *ſpurious.* 3. Recite the ſubſtance of *two* of them more peculiarly relating to our preſent

preſent Argument, with a few Animadverſions thereon.

What they are.

Theſe Decretal Epiſtles are *Letters ſuppoſed to be Authoritatively written upon emergent Occaſions by the Primitive Biſhops of* Rome, beginning with *Clement* (one of *Peter's* pretended immediate Succeſſors) in whoſe name there are five; four in the name of *Anacletus*, two of *Alexander's*, three of *Sixtus's*, and ſo downwards, ſometimes one, ſometimetimes two, ſometimes three, from every ſucceeding Biſhop of *Rome* for the firſt 300 Years, and further.

All which Epiſtles came firſt abroad about the Year of our Lord 790. under the Title of *A Collection of Councils and Decretal Epiſtles*, pretended to be made by *Iſidore* Biſhop of *Hiſpalis* (that is *Sevil*) in *Spain*, with a Preface in his Name, wherein he declares that he collected the ſame by the Advice *of fourſcore Biſhops.*

The Collection aſcribed to *Iſidore* a counterfeit.

But the truth is, to make the piece uniform, not only the materials are *Forgeries*, but the Collection it ſelf, and its Author *are Counterfeits*; for although there were ſuch a man (and of eminent note in the Church) as *Iſidore* Biſhop of *Sevil*, yet he could not be the Author of this Collection and Preface, as is proved at large by *Blondel* in his Book Intituled *Pſeudo-Iſidorus*, or *Turrianus Vapulans*, where * he obſerves, that thoſe that write of *Iſidore's* Death, at higheſt, fix it on the Year 647. as *Vaſæus* in his Chronicle; others on the Year 643. as † *Rodericus Toletanus*; or on the Year 635. as the *proper office of the Saints of* Spain; or laſtly, on the Year 636. as *Redemptus Diaconus*, who ſaith he was himſelf an *Eye-witneſs* of *Iſidore's* Death; and with whom agree *Baronius* and many others of the beſt Learned Romaniſts; ſo that the ſame is the common Opinion.

* *Pſeudo Iſidor.* cap. 2.

† *Hiſtor.* l. 2. c. 18.

Now this counterfeit *Iſidore*, that is, the Prefacer in *Iſidore's* Name before this Collection, makes mention of *Pope Agatho*, who came not into the Chair until the year 679. * which muſt be about 40. years after *Iſidore's* Death; follow which of the before-cited Authors you pleaſe. And talks

* *See Onuphr. Chronicon. Pontif.*

talks of the *6th* Oecumenical Council, which was the 3*d* of *Conſtantinople*, held *An. Dom.* 681. Nay, writes of *Boniface* of *Mentz*, ſlain (as *Baronius* obſerves) in the year 755, long after himſelf was in his Grave.

Hence the *Romaniſts* themſelves cannot agree about this Authors Sirname, ſome call him *Iſidore Pacenſis*, others *Iſidore Mercator* * the *Merchant*; and others *Iſidore Peccator*, the *Sinner*, which Addition they ſay he aſſum'd out of *Humility*.

* *Vide Baron. in Notis Martyrolog. ad 4. Apr.*

Beſides, ſoon after the ſaid Collection peep'd abroad, not only *Hincmarus* Archbiſhop of *Rhemes*, one of the Learnedeſt men of that time, wrote againſt it, but the Generality of the *French* Biſhops about the year 865, oppoſed it, alledging that *Iſidore's Wares* (then newly beginning to be ſold) could not have the force of *Canons*, becauſe they were not contain'd in the *Authentick Code*, or Book of Canons formerly known.

Baron. *Anno Chriſt.* 865. N. 5.

† *De Roman. Pontif. L.* 2. *cap.* 14.

Bellarmin confeſſes, † *That Errors are crept into theſe Epiſtles, and that he dare not ſay, they are Indubitable*; yet hopes to excuſe all by ſaying, *That he doubts not at all but they are very ancient.* But what imports it *how old* they are, if they are not *ſo old* as they pretend to be; nor wrote by thoſe whoſe names they bear? As if an *old Deed* being called into queſtion, and the matter of Fact made undeniable, that it was a *Forgery*, he that holds his Poſſeſſion by it, ſhould ſay, It has been *Interlined* indeed, and corrupted in many places, nor was it ſigned or ſealed *by the perſon* that is named a party thereunto, nor in the preſence of the ſame Witneſſes, but yet I hope you will credit it in favour of my Title, for I am confident 'tis *very old*; who would not ſmile at ſuch an Advocate?

Baronius, who ſaw more clearly through the Impoſture, and how much diſhonour ſuch an heap of Forgeries detected in this Learned Age, would reflect on the Contrivers and Abetters; acknowledges, * That this Compilement was falſly father'd

‖ Baron. *ad Ann.* 865. N. 3, 6, 7, 8.

father'd upon *Iſidore* of *Hiſpalis*, and that all thoſe Epiſtles of the *Roman* Biſhops, *from St.* Peter *down to* Siricius (that is, till the year 387.) *are juſtly ſuſpected.* Nay, he calls them *Infirm*, *Adventitious*, and lately *Invented:* And (to remove the ſcandal of forging them, from the Church of *Rome*) tells us, *They were firſt brought out of* Spain *into* France *by one* Riculphus *in the time of* Charlemaigne, *That none* (ſaith he) *may ſlanderouſly ſay the Church of* Rome *feigned them.*

But notwithſtanding they were firſt ſtarted in *Spain*, the Church of *Rome* may ſtill not unjuſtly labounr under a ſuſpition of having an hand in the intrigue, if we conſider, firſt, That the main drift of theſe Epiſtles is to advance *her Honour:* Now if (as moſt plain it is) they are Forged, *Cui Bono?* Who ſhould do it but they, whoſe intereſt alone is thereby promoted? 2*dly*, That when *Hincmarus* oppoſed them, he was by the Biſhop of *Rome* ſo rigorouſly dealt with, that 'tis ſaid he was forced to *retract.* 3*dly*, That when *Benedictus Levita* had out of them extracted *Canons*, being conſcious how weak their credit was, he ſued, and eaſily obtain'd to have the ſame *Confirm'd by the Popes Authority:* * So that if they were not Originally underhand His Holineſſes *Natural Children*, they thenceforth at leaſt became His by Adoption. * Baron. ibid. N. 7.

Thus much touching *the Author* of this Collection; and indeed to ſhew the Epiſtles themſelves to be Forgeries, or of no Credit, we need go no further, having proved that they were handed into the World by *a Counterfeit*; For what need *falſe Lights*, where the Wares are not *Braided?* Why a Vizard in an affair otherwiſe ſo ſafe and honourable, if no ill intrigue on foot? However I will add ſome further Reaſons taken from the ſubject Matter, Phraſe, Abſurdities, and late appearing of theſe Epiſtles, which to me are *Invincible Arguments*, That they are altogether ſpurious.

Reaſons to ſhew the Decretal Epiſtles to be Forgeries.

1. As to their *Matter* or Contents, they purport to be written in the moſt *Primitive Ages* (ſome of them, whilſt ſome of the Apoſtles, at leaſt St. *John*, were yet alive) by Holy

Holy men zealous of Gods Glory and the good of Souls, living under afflictions and dreadful Perſecutions, ſcarce one of them but was *a Martyr* for the Goſpel: Now if ſuch men had indeed left behind them any *Letters* or written Memoirs ſurviving the fury of their Pagan Enemies, to our times, there is no doubt but we ſhould there find the ſweet Breathings of the *Spirit of Meekneſs*, the Myſteries of the Goſpel, Gods infinite Love to miſerable mankind, manifeſted in the Incarnation and Suffering of the Bleſſed Jeſus for their Redemption, and the Terms of the Salvation thereby purchaſed, freely offered to Sinners: We ſhould obſerve the moſt preſſing exhortations to *Repentance*, *Holineſs*, and *newneſs of Life*; The grand concernments of Religion, *Faith* in Chriſt, *Mortification*, *Self-denyal*, *Contempt* of the World and all *outward Grandeurs*, and ſuch like truely Chriſtian Duties every where ſeriouſly inculcated: But of all this in theſe Epiſtles there is *Altum Silentium*, their drift looks not that way; they forget the ſtate of the Church in that time, handle nothing of Doctrine, nothing of the neceſſary Office of the *Miniſters*, nor main Duties of Chriſtian People, nor indeed any thing elſe ſuitable unto that Age, or much worth conſideration; For their main buſineſs every where appears to be by wreſting of Scriptures, falſifying *ſtories*, and other indirect means to advance and lend Colours to the ſupporting or ſpreading the Honour, the Pomp and Empire of the *See of Rome*. Thus *Anacletus* in his firſt Epiſtle is brought in Gloſſing thoſe Words of Chriſt, *Upon this Rock* (that is, upon the *Church of Rome*) *I will build my Church*; And in the 3*d* Epiſtle, *The Church of* Rome *is the Hinge and Head of all Churches*; *for as the door is turned about on the Hinge, ſo all Churches are ruled by the Authority of this Holy See*; and (not to be tedious in numerous Inſtances) the effect of all is, That all thoſe *good humble men*, whoſe Names are abuſed to theſe Letters, are made to ſay of themſelves this much, *We are the Univerſal Biſhops, We are the Heads of the whole*

whole Church; Appeals from all Places ought of right to lye before us. We cannot Err, We may not be controul'd; for it is written, The Diſciple is not above his Maſter, &c. Can any man perſwade himſelf, that thoſe godly Fathers that were daily in jeopardy of their Lives, and put to Death for Preaching and profeſſing the Chriſtian Religion, which condemns nothing more than *Pomp*, vain-Glory and Ambition, had either *Leiſure* or *Inclination* to write Letters up and down the World fill'd with ſuch *Impoſthumated Extravagancies?*

2. The *ſtile* of theſe Letters is remarkable as well as their *matter*; they are pretended to be originally written *in Latine*, and why not, if from Biſhops of *Rome*, whoſe mother Tongue was at that time *Latine*, and that too not yet degenerated, but famous for its Eleganey; and underſtood through a very great part of the then known World? But in theſe *Decretals*, inſtead of the purity of the *Roman Phraſe*, you ſhall familiarly encounter ſuch expreſſions as theſe, *Perſecutiones patienter portare; Petout prome Orare debeas; Epiſcopi Obediendi ſunt, non Iuſidiandi. Ab illis omnes Chriſtiani ſe Cavere debent,* &c. Wherein there is nothing of the Congruity or *Natural Idiom* of the *Latine* Tongue: And ſhall we think that for 300 years and more, there was not *one Biſhop of Rome* that could write *true Latin*, at a time when the common people there, Men, Women and Children did ſpeak the ſame as their common Language? It is a Text of the Popes own Law * *Falſa Latinitas vitiat Reſcriptum Papæ, Falſe Latin ſpoils the* Popes *own Bull or Writ*; if ſo, the Credit of theſe is gone: Indeed their Voice bewrays them, and ſhews they were *Coyn'd* in a far latter Age, when after the *Gothic Incurſions* into *Italy*, *Barbariſms* had overran the *Roman Tongue*, as well as error and ambition the *Roman Church*.

* Extrav. de Reſcriptis; Ad Audientiam.

3. The abſurdities and falſe *Chronology* of theſe Epiſtles loudly proclaims them to be *Antedated* and ſpurious; as St. *Clemens* informs St. *James* of the manner of St. *Peter's Death*, yet it is as certain as any thing we have of thoſe times, and St. *Clemens* undoubtedly knew it, That

James was put to death 7 years *before St. Peter*; *Anacletus* (whom some make next Successor to *Peter*) willeth and straitly chargeth, That all Bishops once every year do *visit the Threshold of St.* Peter's *Church at* Rome (*Limina Petri*) touching which, besides the absurdity of such an injunction, whereby most part of the Bishops throughout the World, must have spent all their time in trudging to and fro to *Rome*, 'tis observable, that there was not then, nor for a long time after any Church built there in the Name of St. *Peter*. *Zepherinus* (Epist. 1.) saith, That Christ commanded his *Apostles* to appoint the 72 Disciples, but St. *Luke*, *Ch.* 10. testifies, That *Christ himself* appointed them. *Antherus* (Ep. 1.) makes mention of *Eusebius* Bishop of *Alexandria*, and of *Fælix* Bishop of *Ephesus*, yet was neither *Eusebius* nor *Fælix* either *Bishop*, or *Born* all the time that *Antherus* lived. *Fabianus* writes of the coming of *Novatus* into *Italy*, yet 'tis clear by St. *Cyprian* and *Eusebius*, That *Novatus* came first into *Italy* in the time of *Cornelius* who succeededed this *Fabianus*. *Marcellinus* (Epist. 2. *ad Orientat*) saith, That the Emperor *might not presume to attempt any thing against the Gospel*, yet was there then no Emperor that own'd or understood the Gospel. *Marcellus* writes to an Heathen Tyrant, and charges him *very gravely* with the authority of St. *Clement*. And whereas St. *Luke*, Ch. 3. sets forth how *John* advised the Soldiers to be content with their Pay, *Meltiades* quite alters the story, and names *Christ* instead of *John*; divers the like Incongruities may frequently be met with in these Epistles.

4. If these Letters had been *real*, Where did they lye hid 4 or 500 years or upwards? Who after so long a burial was able to demonstrate their sincerity? How came the Decretals of the Bishops of *Rome*, first of all to be heard of, and found by no body can certainly tell who, in a corner of *Spain*? 'Tis evident, neither St. *Jerome*, or *Gennadius*, nor *Damasus*, nor any Ancient Father ever alledged any of them, and consequently we may conclude knew nothing of them.

Nay,

Nay the former Bishops of *Rome* never insisted upon them, when they might have been *very serviceable*, as for example, at the Council of *Carthage* held *An.* 418. by 217 Bishops (amongst whom the great *Augustine* was one) where two pretended *Canons* of the Council of *Nice*, sent thither by *Zozimus* then Pope, to give colour of Right to his receiving of *Appeals* from Foreign Provinces, were detected *to* be *forged*, and so the claim of the Bishop of *Rome* rejected, and his Ambition and ill practice smartly reproved by Letters, as by the *Acts of the said Council* yet extant, appears. Now had *Zozimus* known or dreamt of such a number of *Decretals* sent abroad by his Predecessors, wherein their Right of *Universal Headship*, *Appeals*, &c. was so plainly derived and asserted all along *down from St.* Peter *himself*, and that not by *the Canon* of any Council, but by Absolute *Divine Right*, undoubtedly he would have produced or referr'd unto them, rather than stoop to so poor and shameful a *shift* as that of two counterfeit Canons. But that you may the better judge of the Genius of these Decretal Epistles, I shall here present you with the effect of *two* of them, which particularly relate to our present subject.

A Letter from *Clement* to St. *James*.

The first *a Letter* pretended to be wrote by St. *Clemens* to St. *James*, wherein an account is undertaken to be given of *Peter's last words*, and how he solemnly appointed the said *Clement* his *Successor*, in which, after a tedious Haranguo as from St. *Peter's* mouth, concerning the Dignity and Excellency of the *Roman* Chair, he proceeds thus, "When he "[St. *Peter*] had said these things in the midst before them "all, he put his hands on me, and compelled me (wearied "with shamefacedness) to sit in his Chair, and when I was "sat, I beseech thee (said he) O *Clement!* That after (as the "Debt of Nature is) I have ended this present Life, thou "wouldest briefly write to *James* the Brother of our Lord, "after what sort thou hast been a Companion unto me from "the beginning even to the end of my Journey, and my

" Acts, and what, being a follicitous Hearer, thou haſt taken
" from me, diſputing throughout all the Cities, and what in
" all my Preaching was the *Order* both of my *Words* and
" *Actions*, as alſo *what End* ſhall find me in this City. All theſe
" things write unto him; Nor fear that he will be too much
" grieved at my End, ſince he will not doubt but I endure it
" for the ſake of Piety; but it will be a great ſolace to him to
" learn that no *unskilful man*, or unlearned and ignorant of
" the Diſcipline of Eccleſiaſtical Order, hath undertaken *my*
" *Chair*;---Wherefore my Lord *James*, when I had received
" theſe Precepts from him, I held it neceſſary to fulfil what
" he commanded, &c. And ſo goes on to tell St. *James* he had
there ſent him the *whole ſtory* of *Peter's* Preaching under
the Title of the *Itinerary* (or Journies) of *Clement*; For ſo he
ſays St. *Peter* order'd him to call it.

Now not to inſiſt on the matter of this Epiſtle, there are
two Conſiderations beſides, which I conceive very clearly
demonſtrate it to be a Forgery.

A Forgery.

1. That this very Book call'd the *Itinerary* (amongſt other
Writings aſcribed to *Clement*) was by Pope *Gelaſius*, *Anno* 494.
Condemn'd as aforeſaid, Therefore he did not believe this
Epiſtle to be written by *Clement*; for if he had, he would un-
doubtedly have received the *Itinerary* with Reverence, ſince
he could not imagine ſo Holy a Man would have given ſo
large a teſtimony thereto, nor taken ſuch pains to have ſent
it to St. *James*, if it had not been true and authentick; when
therefore Pope *Gelaſius* expreſly condemn'd the Book, he *vir-*
tually condemn'd the Epiſtle, that pretends to recommend it;
for if the *former* be Apocryphal, the *latter* muſt needs be
Counterfeit.

2. By the Teſtimony of St. *Hierom*, and current ſtream
of Antiquity, St. *James* to whom St. *Peter* takes ſuch care to
have his *Memoirs* communicated, was Martyr'd in the 7th
year of *Nero*, whereas they ſay *Peter* ſuffer'd not till the 14.
year of of that Tyrant; ſo that *Clement* muſt write to a Per-

ſon

for that was dead 7 years before. Nay more, this being reckon'd a *Decretal Epistle*, and the greater part of their Authors not placing *Clement* actually in the Chair till after *Linus* and *Cletus* (of whom they say one sat above 11 years, and the other above 12) this must be wrote above 30 years after St. *James*'s death; for tho *Clement* might at any time write *an Epistle*, yet he could not write a *Decretal Epistle* till he was *Pope*. Vide *Platin.*

Another of these Epistles notably relating to our present business, is in the name of *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* in the year 254. which is publisht amongst the rest of the Decretal Epistles in these words:

A Decretal Epistle about Removing St. *Peter*'s Bones.

"*Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* to his dear and most beloved "Brethren, the Sons of the Holy Church of God, and to all "them that serve our Lord in the right Faith.

"Considering the Benevolence of your Charity, because "ye are Lovers of the Apostles, and hold their Faith and "Doctrine, I determined to write unto you, (THE *LORD* "*BEING THE AUTHOR*) some of those things, which are "at this time *NECESSARY TO BE KNOWN*, and which "the Lord assisting by the *MERITS* of the Apostles were "lately done amongst us in the Church of *Rome*, or, are "now in doing, because Charity patronizing, I believe, with "Fatherly Grace, ye willingly receive the *WRITINGS OF* "*THE APOSTOLICAL SEE*, and perform *THE COM-*"*MANDMENTS OF THE SAME*, and *REJOICE IN THE* "*ENCREASES* thereof: Because whosoever engrafts him-"self in the Root of Charity, neither fails of Greatness, nor "becomes void of Fruit, neither does he by Love lose the "efficacious work of fruitfulness; for Charity it self does "exercise the hearts of the Faithful, corroborates their sences "that nothing seemeth grievous, nothing difficult, but all is "easy, which is done while its property is to nourish Con-"cord, to keep the Commandments, to join things dissevered, "to correct evil things, and to consolidate all other virtues "by the Bulwark of its perfection.

"Where-

" Wherefore I beſeech you to *Rejoyce* with us, becauſe by " the entreaty of a certain devout Woman and moſt *Noble* " *Matron Lucina*, the Bodies of *Peter* and *Paul* were lifted out " of the *Catatumbæ* * And firſt of all the Body of the bleſſed " *Paul* was carried with ſilence, and put in the Grounds of " the foreſaid Matron in the *Oſtienſian* way (or Street) near " to that ſide where he was beheaded: But afterwards we re- " ceived the Body of the bleſſed *Peter*, *The Prince of the Apo-* " *ſtles*, and decently placed it near the place where he was " Crucified amongſt the Bodies of the Holy Biſhops in the " Temple of *Apollo*, in the *Golden Mountain*, in the *Vatican* of " *Nero's* Palace, the third day of the Calends of *July* † Pray- " ing God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that theſe his Holy " Apoſtles *Interceeding*, he would purge away the ſpots " of our ſins, and keep you in his will all the days of your " lives, and make you to perſevere in the fruit of good works; " but ſee that you *Rejoyce* together for theſe things, becauſe " the Holy *Apoſtles* themſelves do alſo *Rejoice* together for " your joy. Praiſe ye God always, and he ſhall be glorified in " you: For it is written, *What ſhall I return unto the Lord for* " *all that he hath returned to me? I will take up the Cup of* " *Salvation and call upon the name of the Lord.*

* The *Catacumbæ* (or *Catatumbæ* as here written) were vaſt publick Vaults, or under-ground Repoſitories for dead Bodies; ſee a handſome diſcourſe of them at *Rome*, and thoſe other more ſpacious ones at *Naples*, in Dr. *Burnet's* Letters; who proves that they could not be the workmanſhip of the Primitive Chriſtians for the beſtowing of the bodies of their Martyrs as is commonly ſuggeſted, and intimated here by this feigned Epiſtle) but rather were cut out from the firſt beginning of the City for the common Burial places of the Ancient Heathens, eſpecially the Vulgar ſort, Slaves, &c.

† *June* the 29th.

This Epiſtle is a *Quiver* whence the Modern Church of *Rome* can draw ſeveral Arrows to ſerve her turn; Here is *Worſhipping of Relicks* intimated, *Merit* and *Interceſſion* of Saints owned; the willingneſs of all Chriſtians ſo long ago to obey the *Commands* of the Biſhops of *Rome*, ſuppoſed; as alſo *Peter's* being *Prince of the Apoſtles*, and how much it concern'd all Sons of the Church to rejoyce for the removal of his Corps from one Grave to another.

Proved to be a *Forgery*.

But that the ſame is wholly a *Forgery*, beſides what

we

we have objected against all these Epistles in general, and waving too the *odd matter* and conceited Phrase of this in particular, we need but Animadvert, That 'tis supposed to be written by *Cornelius*, who they say was Bishop of *Rome*, *Anno Chr.* 254. which happens to be a time when that cruel Tyrant, *Decius*, was Emperor, and in the very midst of the 7th Persecution, one of the fiercest that ever Harrass'd the Church from Heathen hands: Now during that *Horrible storm*, when no Christian could appear at *Rome* without certain danger of his Life, Who can imagine this Bishop so much at leisure as to write Letters to all the World, requiring them to rejoyce for the removal of *a parcel of Bones*, as one of the most important Adventures, or singular Blessings of that Age? What probability is there why Madam *Lucina*, in that dismal time, should attempt to disquiet the Apostles dust, and bring both her self and all other Christians then at *Rome* into jeopardy on so frivolous an occasion? Or how was it possible that the Bodies of the Apostles, supposing they could be found after nigh 200 years private Burial, should however be then removed and interr'd so gloriously? How the Christian Bishops of *Rome* even in the height of *Paganism* and Idolatry, came to be buried in the *Temple of Apollo*? or how *Peter* could be laid in so many places at once, *viz.* amongst the *Bishops of Rome*, in the *Temple of Apollo*, in the *Golden Mountain*, and in the *Vatican* of *Nero's* Palace?

But further, to convince you of the Fraud, *Binius*, tho he set down this Epistle very formally as a good Record, as his Predecessors in that kind had done before him, yet tells us, That *this Story of the Translation of the Apostles Bones, which it attributes to* Cornelius, *seems to be an Error crept in from amongst the rest of the Mistakes of the Pontifical attributed to Pope* Damasus (who lived above 100 years after this *Cornelius*) *For more truely* (saith he) *this Translation happen'd in the first Age a little after their Passion*; for which he cites St. *Gregory* the Pope, who lived long after both the other *Two*.

So

So that it seems amongst them 'tis no strange matter for a *Prior* Author to suck in Errors from a *latter*, and yet for a *modern* Authors Testimony to overthrow that of others *more Ancient*, and therefore more Authentick, one would think (in a matter of Fact relating to their own times, or much nearer them) than himself.

But this mention of the Pontifical, brings into my mind 2 or 3 other pretended Ancient Authors whom I had almost forgot, that are sometimes alledged to prove St. *Peter's* being at, and suffering in *Rome*, viz. *Clement's Constitutions* and *Recognitions*, St. *Abdias*, and the said *Pontifical*. But all these may in a few words be dispatch'd; for as for those two Books of *Clements*, they are acknowledged by the most Learned *Romanists* to be *Counterfeit*, or dubious; and his *Recognitions* is said to be the same that is otherwise call'd his *Itinerary*, Condemn'd by *Gelasius*. St. *Abdias* of the Lives of the Apostles was first found out, and set forth by one *Wolphgangus Zazius* not very many years ago, and the Work shews it self to be *vain* and *fictitious*; Insomuch that *Bellarmin** saith of that and the Epistles of *Martial* (called the Apostle of *France*) *Citantur a nobis, quamvis non Ignoremus eos Libros non esse tantæ Auctoritatis ut in iis Dogmata fundari possint; They are Cited by us, tho we are not Ignorant that those Books are not of such Authority that any certain opinions can thereon be grounded.*—But if they know them to be of no Authority, Why do they *Cite* them? *Causa patet.*

Of *Clemens.*

Of *Abdias.*

* In *Recogn.*

Of the *Pontifical.*

Touching the *Pontifical* (*Liber Pontificalis in Latine*, or the Book of the Popes) it is pretended to be written by *Damasus* (who was Bishop of *Rome*, *Ann.* 369.) describing the Acts of the Bishops of *Rome* from Pope *Peter* downwards. *Binius* affords us this Note, That *Damasus* did not write it, but rather it is *patched up* [Consarcinatus est] *by divers Authors*, as may be proved by this, That almost in every Popes Life, it contains things *contradictory* and clashing one with another; see also *Baronius*, *Anno* 69. *N.* 37. & *Anno* 348. *N.* 16.

N. 16. And *Possevin. Apparat. sacr. verb.* Damascus

I have the longer insisted on these counterfeit Ancients, because the Romanists frequently do flourish with their Names to amuse the ignorant, not only in this matter, but several other important Controversies; but I hope by these few Remarks, our People will learn what value is due to such Authors; for though by dint of Reason and Authority our Opponents are now and then forced to brand these witnesses, yet they shall for all that, continue to vouch them (of which, you had but now *Bellarmin*'s Confession, and the same might be made out by a multitude of Instances) which as it is the highest *disingenuity*, so it argues some *great* but very *bad* Design. And as it is an undoubted mark of an ill Cause, wherein there is found *Subornation*, *Perjury* or *Forgery*; so to me it is a shrewd sign, that the *whole Story* of *Peter*'s being at *Rome*, *is false*, since there have been such *ill means* contriv'd, or at least made use of to support and recommend it to the Worlds Credulity.

Baronius despairs of any certainty of the Apostles Actions not mentioned in Scripture.

I shall conclude this Chapter with a very remarkable Acknowledgment from Cardinal *Baronius*, one as well skill'd (I think I may say) in Antiquity as ever any that appeared for the Church of *Rome*, who speaking of the *History of the Apostles*, does thus *Ingenuously* express himself, *quod vero pertines*, &c. " But as to what relates to the things done " by them [the Apostles] after they were once separated " one from another, 'tis very obscure; for since there are " both Actions and Writings in the name of the Apo- " stles found to be suppositious; and if any thing were " told of them by true and sincere Writers, the same " does not all remain intire and uncorrupted, it will plainly " make one *despair* of ever obtaining any truth and cer- " tainty therein. If this most Learned *Antiquary* of their party, found it so difficult and hopeless a Task to retreive any certainty of the Apostles *Acts* or Writings (further than expressed in Scripture, for so I conceive he would be understood)

ſtood) from the Monuments of the Ancients, becauſe they were ſo confuſed, ſuppoſititious and corrupted, we ought ſure at leaſt to *ſuſpend* our opinions touching *Peter's being at* Rome and Biſhop there ſo many Years, which with all the minute Circumſtances, is ſo confidently affirmed by *leſs Learned Writers* on ſuch ſuppoſed Teſtimonies of the Ancients.

CHAP. V.

The improbability of Peter's *being Biſhop of* Rome, *argued from the* Incoherences *of their Teſtimonies who write thereof.*

WE have gone through the proofs offered for the affirmative, *viz.* That *Peter* was at *Rome* and Biſhop there; we now proceed to ſome Conſiderations, which if they do not evince the contrary to every impartial mans full ſatisfaction, muſt yet at leaſt be acknowledged of *ſuch weight* as may juſtly render the *Negative* probable to the higheſt Degree. All which I ſhall reduce to two Heads. 1. The *Incoherences* of the Story. 2. Its *unlikelihood* from the account given of *Peter* in Sacred Scripture.

1. Then, the Reader muſt be reminded, that the buſineſs of *Peter's* being at *Rome*, or Biſhop there, depends wholly on *Humane Teſtimony*; for there is but one only Text, *viz.* That of, *the Church of* Babylon *ſaluteth you*, produced in favour of the Story; and how impertinently, and not without groſs wreſting, we have ſhown. Now there is nothing that more invalidates Humane Evidence than *Diſagreement*; for as Truth is always *uniform*, ſo falſhood being various is frequentyl attended with *Repugnancies* and Contradictions. In the ſtory of *Suſanna* (which the Roman Church regards as Canonical) the two Elders were by one variant Circumſtance

ſtance convict of *Perjury*; and the falſhood of thoſe that appeared againſt our Bleſſed Lord, is remark'd by the Holy Ghoſt from this, *That their Witneſſes agreed not together*, Mark 14. 56. Now therefore let us examine ſeparately the Witneſſes in the Caſe before us.

1. Queſtion. *When did* Peter *come to* Rome? Of the time of *Peters* coming to *Rome*.

Anſw. At the beginning of the Reign of *Claudius*, ſaith *Oroſius*, l. 7. c. 6. In the 2*d* Year of his Reign, ſaith St. *Hierom*, in the 3*d* ſaith *Onuphrius*; no, crys *Faſciculus Temporum*, it was in the 4*th* Year of his Reign; and ſo ſays *Nauclerus*; Nay, upon my word, ſays *Paſchaſius de vit. ſanct.* it was in the 14*th* year of *Claudius*'s Reign—But as the aged Lady could ſee the *Needle* but not the *Barn*; ſo tho they are no ſurer of the *Year*, they are exact *as to the Day*, it was preciſely the 18*th* Day of *January*; this you may be ſure of, for the Church of *Rome*, that is, *Pope Paul* the 4*th*, as long ago (forſooth) as the year of our Lord, 1557. thought fit to appoint that Day to be kept *Feſtival* on that occaſion; and accordingly you may ſee it ſet down in the *Calendarium Catholicum*.

2. Queſtion. *How long did* Peter *continue Biſhop of* Rome? How long he ſtaid there?

Anſw. 27 Years ſaith St. *Hierom*, 29 ſaith Venerable *Bede*, 25 Years 7 Months and 8 Days ſays *Faſciculus Temporum*, juſt 25 Years 2 Months and 3 Days, ſays the *Pontifical* pretended to be written by Infallible Pope *Damaſus*.— But hearkye Friend! if he came to *Rome* the 18*th* of *January*, and continued Biſhop thereof 25 Years 2 Months and 3 Days, then he muſt be put to Death on the 22*th* of *March*; and if ſo, why does the Church Celebrate his Martyrdom on the 29*th* of *June*—Ay, but *Damaſus* is miſtaken (ſaith *Binius* with the conſent of *Barnious*) *Peter* did not hold the Chair twenty five Years, two Months, and three Days, it was exactly twenty four Years, five Months, and twelve Days, and ſo he might be Martyred on the 29*th* of *June*——— Very good! this indeed avoids one

Inconvenience, but it dashes upon *another*— For if he were put to Death on the 29*th* of *June*, then he could not dye in the fourteenth Year of *Nero*; but almost all Writers of the story attest that he dyed in the 14*th* Year of *Nero*: Now the 14*th* Year of *Nero* began the 13*th* of *October*, and on the 10*th* of *June* following *Nero* being declared *a publick Enemy* kill'd himself; so that if *Peter* were put to Death (according to the former Opinion) on the 22*th* of *March*, it might be in *Nero*'s 14*th* Year. But if it were on the 29*th* of *June*, it must be either in his 13*th* or some other foregoing Year, which is contrary to the whole stream of your Evidence, or else after *Nero*'s Death, which likewise will utterly marr the credit of the whole story; for no man ever talk'd of *Peter*'s being at *Rome*, but he also affirm'd that he suffer'd there under *Nero*.

What Year *Peter* suffered

3. Question. In *what Year* after our Lords Passion was *Peter* Martyr'd?

Ans. It was in the 38*th* Year after the Passion of our Lord, says the Pontifical; the 37*th* says *Nicephorus*; no, crys *Binnius*, it was in the 35*th* Year after the Passion, *An. Chr.* 69. And yet *Onuphrius* is confident it was exactly 34 Years 3 Months and 4 Days after our Lords Passion, the 29*th* of *June*, *An. Dom.* 68.

Did *Paul* suffer at the same time.

4. Question. *Were* Peter *and* Paul *put to Death* at the same time.

Answ. Yes, on the *same* Day, says the Pontifical, not the same Year tho, say *Prudentius* and St. *Augustine*—— I will tell you how it was, says *Binnius*, it was the same Day of the Month indeed, though not the same *Year*.

Well, but if one out-liv'd the other at least a year, since *Paul* seems likest to be the survivor, because, as St. *Peter* was much the *elder man* (for he was Marryed when first call'd to the *Apostleship*, whereas *Paul* at the stoning of *Stephen* is expresly said * to be *a young man*) so also if he were Prince of the Apostles, Soveraign Head of the Christians,

* Acts 7 58.

and

and Bishop of *Rome*, he was on that account likest to incur the fury of *Nero*. If, I say, *Paul* did (as he might for what appears to the contrary) outlive *Peter*, why might not he have been as fit to succeed as another? Would it it not be very hard, that *Paul* who avow'd himself not inferior *to the chiefest of the Apostles*, should in his old Age be made Subject to a *Linus*, a *Cletus*, or a *Clement*? Or suppose he was put to Death before or with *Peter*, yet if *Peter* did as they say constitute a Supream Pastor over the Universal Church to succeed him, why should he not have committed that Charge to some other of the Apostles? especially since all Ecclesiastical Historians seem agreed, That St. *John* (who is honoured with the Title of *the Beloved Disciple*) did survive for many years after, and consequently must become inferiour to some one that was no Apostle.

But not only *Prudentius* tells us, That *Paul* suffered a Day after *Peter*, but *Abdias* (one of our Adversaries Worthy Authors) avers it was two years after; nay, if that be true, which the same *Abdias* relates, That *after* the Crucifying of *Peter*, *Paul* remained in his free Custody at *Rome*, mentioned in the 28*th* of the *Acts* (which was as St. *Hierom* witnesseth in the third or fourth year of *Nero*) then it must be ten years betwixt the Martyrdom of *Peter* and *Paul*, forasmuch as it is by all Writers acknowledged, That *Paul* suffered in the last, that is, the 14*th* year of *Nero*.

Vspergensis saith these Apostles were both Executed in *one Year*, but he noteth not that they dyed in *one Day*; *Sabellicus* saith, both in one Year and one Day; some say, as St. *Ambrose*, they dyed together both in *one Place*; but *Dionysius* seems to say otherwise, telling us that the one bad the other *farewel when they were parted asunder* going to Death; most Writers charge *Nero* as the Author of both their Deaths; but *Linus* saith, That *Agrippa commanded*

manded Peter *to be put to Death* (which must be at *Jeruſalem*) *becauſe by his perſwaſion four of the ſaid* Agrippa's *Concubines refuſed to live any longer in ſuch unchaſt life with the King.*

Of Peters Succeſſor.

5. Queſtion.--- But *who indeed was* Peter's *next and immediate Succeſſar?*

Anſw. Linus a *Tuſcan* (ſaith *Platina*) for eleven Years, three Months, and twelve Days; who was ſucceeded by *Cletus* a *Roman*, for twelve Years, one Month, and eleven Days; after which the See was vacant twenty Days, and then came *Clement* a *Roman*, who held it nine Years, two Months, and ten Days. And *Binius* ſaith, that *Linus* was Pope but eleven Years, two Months, and twenty three Days, and quarrels with *Damaſus* for aſſigning to *Cletus* twelve Years, one Month, and eleven Days. But the difference is not only in point of *time* of their ſeveral *Pontificates* (though yet a Days difference, where ſo great an exactneſs is pretended, is enough to diſcredit all the Relation) but there is as much Cloud and Debate in the very *order of Succeſſion.* For *Tertullian*, Lib. de Præſcript. and St. *Hierom* on the 25*th* of *Iſaiah*, place *Clement next* and immediately after St. *Peter.* And *Clement* himſelf (if you hearken to the before-recited Epiſtle in his Name to St. *James*) avers that *Peter* moſt ſolemnly conferred *that Dignity upon him*; nor does *Platina*, or *Onuphrius* forbear to tell us the Circumſtances thereof, ſo that undoubtedly according to theſe Authorities he was the next Succeſſor. But yet *Optatus* (*lib.* 2. *contr. Parm.*) and St. *Auguſtine* (*Epiſt.* 165.) rank *Linus* next after *Peter*, and next not only *Cletus*, but *Anacletus*, and *after all theſe* Clement as the fourth (or if you will include St. *Peter* the fifth) *Iræneus*, lib. 3. cap. 3. tells us that *Peter* and *Paul* Conſtituted *Linus* the *firſt* (then *Peter* was not the firſt) Biſhop of *Rome*; That *Anacletus* ſucceeded him, and that *Clemens* was the third Biſhop

ſhop of *Rome*; *Onuphrius* marſhals them thus——*Linus* eleven Years, three Months, and twelve Days; *Clement* nine Years, four Months, and twenty ſix Days, *Cletus* ſix Years, five Months, and three Days. And (after ſeven Days Vacancy) *Anacletus* twelve Years, two Months, and ten Days; and to ſolve the matter as well as he can, makes the ſaid *Linus* only as a *ſuffragan* Biſhop under *Peter*, and reckons the ſaid eleven Years, three Months, and three Days, attributed to *Linus* to be in *Peter*'s Life time (who he ſays was for the moſt part abſent from *Rome*) ſave only twenty ſix Days, which he ſurvived after *Peter*, and then was Martyr'd; during which 26 Days he was not *chief* Biſhop neither, but only *a Coadjutor* to *Clement* as he had been to *Peter*. For (ſaith he) *Clement* was the immediate *Succeſſor in chief* to *Peter*, and held the Chair for nine Years, four Months, and twenty ſix Days, and then and not before came *Cletus*, and he ſate ſix Years, five Months, and three Days as Soveraign Biſhop (though for twenty Years and upwards he had been *Chorepiſcopus* Suffragan Biſhop or Coadjutor under *Peter* and *Clement*) whoſe Succeſſor was *Anacletus*, &c. You ſee what pains this Learned Man is at to render the ſtory Uniform.

But as this is a new Invention, for neither *Platina*, nor the Ancients mention a word of ſuffraganſhip in the Caſe, but make *Linus* as *ſubſtantial a Pope* as any of the reſt; ſo it agrees not with that account that *Bellarmin* gives of that matter; for he ſaith, That *Peter* indeed left the Epiſcopal See to *Clement*; but when he was dead, *Clement* out of *Humility* refuſed to ſit therein, as long as *Linus* and *Cletus* lived, who had been *Peter*'s *Coadjutors* in the Epiſcopal Office; and ſo actually *Linus* ſucceeded *Peter*, *Cletus* to *Linus*, and *Clement* to *Cletus*, tho ſome Authors, becauſe *Clement* was appointed Succeſſour, name him firſt.

To which I Anſwer, That as the other was but the *ſurmiſe* The Anſwer to both.

miſe of *Onuphrius*, ſo this is but the *Nude Averment* of the Cardinal, and both the one and the other in it ſelf improbable; for if *Peter* had juſt cauſe to Elect *Clement*, then *Clement* could have no juſt Cauſe to *reject* the Office impoſed. If *Peter* were appointed by our Lord to Govern all the Churches in the World, no doubt he was fit and enabled to *diſcharge that Office*; And what need he then have *two Coadjutors* to Rule the particular *Church of Rome*? Or why would he take upon himſelf the Biſhoprick of *Rome*, from whence he was ſo often to be *abſent*, and thereby give a dangerous Precedent of *NON-RESIDENCY*, and truſting to the Care of Delegates in the Government of the Church? Or if he muſt have help, would not *Paul* (at leaſt after he came to *Rome*) have been as good a Coadjutor as either *Linus* or *Cletus*? Again, If *Peter* thought *Clement* moſt worthy to ſucceed him, why was he not Conſtituted at leaſt an equal *Suffragan Biſhop* with the other two before? If *Linus* and *Cletus* had been worthy of that Honour, they would no doubt have ſhewn their humility no leſs in Reverencing St. *Peter's laſt Will* and Ordinance, than *Clement* did his in urging *Peter's Antecedent Fact* of admitting thoſe two his Aſſiſtants; Or why did not *Clement* declare ſuch his Humility whilſt *Peter* was alive, that he might have Conſtituted and Conſecrated another Succeſſor? Or why in his Letter to St. *James* does he not take notice *how*, and on what ſcore he had declined that Office, which *Peter* ſo formally conferr'd upon him? Or in a word, If *Peter* did ſo ſolemnly inveſt *Clement* with the Government of the Church, and Inſtitute him his Succeſſor by impoſition of Hands, and making him ſit down (in ſpight of his Modeſty) in his own Epiſcopal Chair, and yet after *Peter's* Death *Linus* and *Cletus* did hold and actually Exerciſe the ſame ſucceſſively for above twenty Years, does it not follow,

That

That the two first Bishops of *Rome* next after St. *Peter* were *unlawful*, as having no due Call or Title, but guilty of *Usurpation*; from which no pretence of *Clement*'s Humility can excuse them? For who *Ordain'd* them? Or how could they duely become capable of that Dignity?

The Sixth Question, *Was Peter Bishop of Antioch before he went to Rome?* Whether *Peter* sat Seven years at *Antioch*, before he went to *Rome?*

Answ. Yes, Seven years, says the Pontifical, and so says *Platina*, and 'tis the common Vogue of those that mention his being at *Rome*: But, *No*, says *Onuphrius*, and as very warm in the point, *Ad Initium secundi Anni Imperii Claudii Petrum Judæa nunquam Excessisse ex Actis Apostolorum & Pauli Epistola ad Galatas — Apertissime constat; idem in Chronico refert Eusebius, & ego alibi multis Rationibus probavi*, &c. *That Peter never stirr'd out of Judea till the beginning of the second year of the Reign of Claudius, is most certain and evident from the Acts of the Apostles, and Pauls Epistle to the Galatians: Eusebius in his Chronicon asserts the same; and I (says he) have proved it elsewhere by many Reasons. Now in this second year of Claudius, all the Authors that mention Peters being at Rome, affirm he arrived there; How then could he before that have sat seven years as Bishop of Antioch? But from the Testimony of most Antient Authors, I* (says the said *Onuphrius*) *have settled the Busin-ss thus* — "That in the "Tenth year after Christs Passion, (which was still "the Second of *Claudius*, tho' towards the end of it) "St. *Peter* after his deliverance out of Prison, ha- "ving spent a year in Preaching along the several "Countreys in his Journey towards *Rome*, did Ar- The History of *Peter*, according to *Onuphrius*.

"rive at that City on the Eighteenth of *January*:
"From whence to the time of his death was about
"Twenty-five years. But four years after, *viz.* the
"Seventh of *Claudius*, the Jews being baniſh'd by an
"Edict, he was forced to leave *Rome*, and Returned
"to *Jeruſalem*; *Agrippa*, for fear of whom he fled out
"of *Judea*, being now dead: There he was preſent
"at the Apoſtolical Council, and death of the Bleſ-
"ſed Virgin; from whence, leaving the Apoſtle
"*James* at *Jeruſalem*, he went to *Antioch*, and there
"remained ſeven years, until the death of *Claudius*,
"and beginning of the Empire of *Nero*, when with
"*Mark* the Evangeliſt he Return'd to *Rome*, and Re-
"Eſtabliſh'd the decaying Roman Church, appoint-
"ed *Linus* and *Cletus* his Suffragan-Biſhops or Dele-
"gates, and Admoniſh'd *Mark* to write his Goſpel:
"After which, he Travell'd almoſt throughout all
"*Europe*, and Returning to *Rome* with the Apoſtle
"*Paul*, when *Nero* was worrying the Chriſtians as
"Authors of the great Conflagration that happened
"there in the laſt year of his Reign, after he had
"Choſen *Clement* to be Biſhop of *Rome*, was Cruci-
"fy'd the 29th of *June*; Twenty-four years, five
"months, and twelve days after he firſt came to that
"City under *Claudius*.

This Account *Onuphrius* ſays he has gathered out of abundance of moſt *Ancient Authors*, whom he cites; not that any one Mortal, Ancient or Modern, before himſelf, ever wrote any ſuch thing; but this he ſuppoſeth may be ſaid, as the only Expedient to Reconcile their Contradictions.

Yet for all that, *Bellarmine* is ſo far from Allowing the ſame, that with great pains he undertakes to Refute it; and maintains, "That *Peter* did not re-

"main

"main full five years after our Lords Aſcenſion in *Ju-*
"*dea*, before he went to *Antioch*, where he was Bi-
"ſhop near Seven Years, and then (and not before)
"went to *Rome*.

I ſhall not undertake here to Umpire the Caſe between theſe two Eminent Authors; But in another Chapter may poſſibly make it appear, That not only *one*, but *both* of them may be miſtaken; In the mean time by this brief ſtate of the Caſe, you cannot but ſee, that there is no one particular of the ſtory *clear* or *certain*, but that the Witneſſes every where thwart and trip up each others Heels, and how hard their moſt Learned Advocates are forc'd to labour colourably to Reconcile them, yet can by no means agree in their Inventions for that purpoſe.

From whence it will not be difficult to collect what Judgment we are to make of the whole Story: For 'tis no Excuſe to ſay that their Diſagreements are but *ſmall*, and only in Circumſtances; for where there is every where ſuch a punctual Exactneſs pretended, as not only to years, but months and days, and yet all different from, and inconſiſtent with each other, 'tis methinks a great Argument that the Original Teſtimonies were all forged; or at leaſt, that the ſeveral Authors took up their Stories on Truſt, and themſelves knew nothing of the matter.

But to all this, *Bellarmine* ſays,

1. *That difference touching the Time of any thing done, does not weaken the Truth of the thing it ſelf; There are various Opinions how long it is ſince the Creation of the World, and touching the time of Chriſt's Crucifixion; Shall we therefore conclude that the World was not created, or our Saviour not Crucified?* Object. 1.

Answer. I Reply, That where a thing it self is certain, it is not by a difference of that kind rendred uncertain; but where a thing it self is doubtful, depending only on suspected Evidence, the same by Contradictory Circumstances is render'd much more uncertain and improbable That the World was Created, That our Saviour Suffer'd, we have Infallible Witnesses, who in nothing material disagree, but confirm each others Testimony: Whereas here is no sound Evidence of *Peter*'s being at *Rome*, or Bishop there; And they that undertake to tell the Fact, do with equal Assurance and pretended Punctualness relate Circumstances; and if they are Deceivers, or deceived in one, they may as well in the other.

Object. 2. 2. As to the various Accounts given about *Peter*'s Successor, the Learned Cardinal says, *That tho' we should be ignorant who it was that succeeded him, yet we ought not for that cause to doubt but some body did succeed.*

Answer. But this Answer comes not home to the purpose; For the Question is not so much who did Succeed, as whether *Peter* did at all Precede in the particular Bishoprick of *Rome*: Now because the same Witnesses that tell us of *Peter*'s Preceding, do also testifie of his Successors, if one part of their Testimony be infirm, the whole is weakened.

Lastly, As the Antients thwart and interfere with *each other* in this Story of *Peter*'s being at *Rome*, so *Baronius*, one of the most industrious Modern Advocates for it, contradicts himself, for he says *, *Peter* died *A.C.*69. and yet affirms † that he came to *Antioch A.C.*39. and was Bishop there 7 years, and after that 25 years Bishop of *Rome*, which must be till the year 71. So that *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome* two years after he was dead.

* *Baron. Annal. Tom.*1. *ad Ann.*69. *S.*9.
† *Idem ad An.* 39.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Account given of Peter *in Scripture, compared with the* Roman *Hiſtory; Whereby the Common Relation of* Peter's *being at* Rome, *or Biſhop firſt of* Antioch, *and afterwards of* Rome, *appears to be highly Improbable, or rather altogether Falſe.*

THat St. *Peter*'s being Biſhop of *Rome*, cannot be proved by Scripture, we have ſhewn before; To which we may add, that the ſame is further confeſs'd by Learned Romaniſts; *By the Scripture it cans not be evinc'd either that he was Biſhop of* Rome, *or ever was at* Rome *at all*; ſaith *Marſilius Patavinus.* () And then conſidering the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtories that affirm it, he does it after ſuch a faſhion, as plainly ſhew he believ'd them not. *Occham*, that Eminent Schoolman, who flouriſht about the Year 1328. affirms, () *Theſe are in the number of things that neither are contained in Scripture, nor can be manifeſtly proved by it alone*, viz. *That* Peter *was Biſhop of* Rome; *That he remov'd his See from* Antioch *to* Rome; *That the Biſhops of* Rome *ſucceed* Peter; *That the Church of* Rome *hath the Primacy, whereof there is no mention in the Scripture*; *As likewiſe there is not, that he* [Peter] *govern'd the Church of* Rome, *nor any thing touching the Papacy thereof.*

() *Defens. Pac. part.* 2. *C.* 16

() () *Occh. Dial. par.* 1. *L.* 2. *Ca* 3.

This Conſideration alone, methinks, ſhould be enough to perſwade any man from Entertaining the ſame, or any of the Inferences that meerly depend thereon, as matters of Faith; Eſpecially if we further remarque, that the Scripture is not only ſilent as to *Peter*'s

Peter's being at *Rome*, and Biſhop there, but yeilds not a few ſhrew'd and preſſing Indications to the contrary ; Which it ſhall be the ſubject of this Chapter briefly to ſumm up.

But becauſe the ſame will not ſo clearly appear as to the matter in queſtion, without being compared with the Roman Hiſtory ; I ſhall for the aſſiſtance of the Vulgar Reader, firſt ſet down a ſhort Chronology (out of *Suetonius*, *Dio*, and the beſt Hiſtorians of thoſe times) of the Reigns of thoſe Emperours, whom we ſhall have occaſion to mention ; And alſo of the Years after our Lords Paſſion and St. *Paul*'s Converſion, anſwering thereunto, which will render the whole diſpute very conſpicuous and eaſie to be underſtood.

Our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, ὁ Θεάνθρωπος, was born of the Bleſſed Virgin in the Forty Second Year of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, who reigned in all Fifty Six Years, and Dyed the Nineteenth of *Auguſt*.

Tiberius Succeeding, Raign'd Twenty Two Years, Six Months, and Twenty Six Days, Dying the Sixteenth of *March*.

It is expreſly ſaid by the Evangeliſt, that in the Fifteenth Year of this *Tiberius*, *Chriſt* began to be about Thirty Years of his Age. (*Luke.* 3. 1. Compared with Verſe 3.) That is, as we may probably underſtand, was then in his Thirtieth Year Current, for whereas *Tiberius*'s Fifteenth Year began the Nineteenth of *Auguſt*, *Chriſt*'s Thirtieth Year began (according to our common Reckoning) the Twenty-fifth of *December* following ; And ſo at the beginning of *Tiberius*'s Reign, he had near compleated, but not fully, his Fifteenth year : Now deduct Fourteen years compleat, out of the Fifty-ſix years of *Auguſtus*, there

there remains Forty-two. Whence it ſollows, That we muſt take our Lord to have been Born in the Forty-ſecond year current of *Auguſtus*, as aforeſaid.

In the 19th year of this *Tiberius*, and in the 34th current of our Lords Age, He was crucified in the month of *March*.

I am not ignorant that ſome place our Saviours Crucifixion in the 33th year of his Age: And *Alſtedius* is very poſitive that it was in the 35th. But I follow the middle and more common Opinion, and which (if I miſtake not) the mention of the ſeveral Paſſovers after his Baptiſm will juſtify.

The 20th year of *Tiberius* began in *Auguſt* } ſollow-
The 35th of *Chriſts* Birth in *December* } ing.

And in *March* after (that is *Anno. Dom.* 35. and of *Tiberius* the 20th) was compleated the firſt year after the Paſſion, and the ſecond began.

In *Auguſt*, *Anno Chr.* 35. began the 21th of *Tiberius*, and in *December* following, but ſtill in the ſecond year after the Paſſion, began the 36th year of Chriſt. The exact time when *Paul* was Converted, the Scripture does not mention, but it is generally taken to be in the 2d year after the Paſſion, on the 25th of *January*. And indeed, it can ſcarce be imagined to be in the firſt year, ſince 'tis nothing likely all thoſe Tranſactions mentioned in the firſt Eight Chapters of the *Acts*, as between Chriſts Aſcenſion, and his Converſion, ſhould be accompliſhed in ſeven or eight months ſpace. But if we take it to be the ſecond year, then ſince the particular day is ſuppoſed to be the 25th of *January*; that is to ſay five months after the beginning of the 21th year of *Claudius*, one month after the Commencement of the 36th year of our Lords Nativity;

tivity; and tho' in the second, yet within two months of the beginning of the third year from the Passion. We may for avoiding Confusion, taking the Denomination from the greater part, make the first year Current of *Paul's* Conversion, to Answer to the 36th year Current of Christ's Birth, the 21th of the Reign of *Tiberius*, and the 3d after the Passion (always remembring their differing Commencements.) And so the Account will stand as in the Table following.

Year of Christ.	Year of *Tiberius*.	Year of the Passion.	Year of *Paul's* Conversion.
34	19	1	0.
35	20	2	0.

In this year *Peter* met with *Simon Magus* at *Samaria*, according to *Baronius*.

36	21	3	1.
37	22	4	2.

The 22th year of *Tiberius*, ended in *Aug.* 37. but he lived till the 16th of *March* following, which was in the 38th year of our Lord, the 4th year of his Passion being very near compleat, and almost two months after the beginning of the third year of *Paul's* Conversion.

Caligula began to Reign the 17th of *March*, *Anno Chr.* 38. and the same month began the fifth year from the Passion. He Reigned three years, ten months, and eight days.

Of Christ.	Of *Caligula*.	Of the Passion.	Of *Paul's* Conv.
38	1	5	3
39	2	6	4

Baronius says *Peter* now founded the *Church* of *Antioch*.

40	3	7	5
41	4	8	6

The

The third year of *Caligula* (and 7th after the Paſſion) ended *March*, *A°*. 41. but he Reigned afterwards ten months and eight days; ſo he died the 24th of *January*, in the 42th year of Chriſt, the eighth year current of the Paſſion.

Claudius Reigned 13 years, eight months, and 18 days, beginning the 24th of *Jan. A.C.* 42. The very next day began the ſeventh year of *Paul's* Converſion, and in *March* following began the ninth after the Paſſion.

Anno Chriſti.	Of *Claudius.*	Of the Paſſion.	Of *Pauls* Conv.
42	1	9	7.
43	2	10	8.

In this year *Peter* is ſuppoſed to become Bp. of *Rome.*

44	3	11	9.
45	4	12	10.

Herod Agrippa dies.

46	5	13	11.
47	6	14	12.
48	7	15	13.
49	8	16	14.
50	9	17	15.

In this 50th year of Chriſt, and ninth of *Claudius*, the Jews were baniſh'd *Rome*, as *Oroſius* teſtifies, and *Baronius* grants.

51	10	18	16.
52	11	19	17.
53	12	20	18.
54	13	21	19.
55	14	22	20.

The 13th year of *Claudius* ended *Jan.* 24. *A.C.* 55. but he lived afterwards eight months and 18 days; ſo that he died *Octob.* 13. 55. in the 22th year after Chriſts Paſſion, and 20th of *Paul's* Converſion.

Then began *Nero* to Reign, for thirteen years, seven months, and 28 days, his first, ending the 14th of *October*, *Anno Chr.* 56. in the 23th year after the Passion, and 21th of *Paul's* Conversion.

Anno Chr.	Of *Nero*,	Of the Passion.	Of *Pauli* Conv.
56	1	23	21.
57	2.	24	22.
58	3	25	23.
59	4	26	24.
60	5	27	25.
61	6	28	26.
62	7	29	27.
63	8	30	28.
64	9	31	29.
65	10	32	30.
66	11	33	31.
67	12	34	32.
68	13	35	33.

Simon Magus died this year, according to *Baronius*.

69	14 part	36	34.

Thus *Nero's* 13th year ended *Octob.* 14. 68. but he reigned longer seven months and 28 days: So that he ridded the World of himself the 10th of *June*, *Ann. Chr.* 69. in the 36th year after our Lords Passion, and 34th current of *Paul's* Conversion.

Now the most common Story of our Modern Romanists is, That St. *Peter* went to *Rome* in the second year of *Claudius*, and 10th after the Passion, and continuing Bishop of that See 25 years, suffer'd Martyrdom in the 14th year of *Nero*.

It remains therefore that we weigh such their Pretensions: And as we have found them too light and void of Proof on their side; so by comparing them with the Account given of St. *Peter* in the *Acts of the Apostles*,

Apostles and the *Epistle to the Galatians*, and other passages of infallible Writ, it will perhaps satisfactorily appear, not only that *Peter* was not at *Rome* in the said second Year of *Claudius*, Nor Bishop there 25 Years; But that indeed he was not, nor could be there at all either before or after.

I think it is not pretended (nor if it were would it serve their turn) that *Peter* was ever at *Rome* before *Christs* Crucifixion, but spent his time in or about *Judea*, either in his Vocation of a Fisherman, or with the rest of the Disciples attending the Lord; Nor are we to look for him at *Rome* after the death of *Nero*, for they all affirm he was put to death under that Tyrant, so that we have only Thirty Six Years to account for, *viz.* from the Passion to the End of *Nero*, that is to say, from the year of Our Lord 34. to the Year 70.

Peter not at *Rome* the first Two Years after the Passion.

For the First and Second Year after the Lords Death and Resurrection, 'tis undeniable that *Peter* was in or about *Judea*, first with the rest of the Apostles on Mount *Olivet*, beholding our Saviours Ascension, and then return'd to *Jerusalem*, expecting the Promised Comforter; and when the *Holy Ghost* descended upon them, made that excellent Sermon, whereby Three Thousand Souls were Converted, *Acts* 2. Healed the Lame man, *Acts* 3. Whereupon he was Imprisoned, *Act* 4. He dreadfully Punishes the Hypocrisie and Lies of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, and wrought many other Miracles till he was again Imprisoned, and delivered by an Angel, &c. *Acts* 5. He was also at *Jerusalem* at the choice of *Deacons*, *Acts* 6. And if his journey when sent with *John* by the rest of the Apostles to *Samaria*, *Acts* 8. be to be attributed to these Two Years, it is expressly said, V 25. that he return'd to *Jerusalem*.

Nor in the Third nor Fourth.

In the Year of our Lord 37. (which was the fourth of the Paſſion) *Pilate* (as *Euſebius*, *L.* 2. *C.* 2. and *Uſpergenſis* teſtify) Wrote his Letter to *Tiberius* concerning Chriſt, his Doctrine, Divine Miracles, Death and Reſurrection, whereupon that Emperour was willing to have Chriſt admitted amongſt the Gods of *Rome*, but was oppoſed by the Senate; Now if *Peter* had been Preaching at *Rome*, or Biſhop there, either the year before or that time, this could not have been any News to the Emperour, nor would *Pilates* Letter have prevail'd ſo much with him touching Chriſt, as the Doctrine, or eſpecially the Miracles which *Peter* would (for Confirming of the Faith) have done there in his Name; On the contrary, 'tis plain from the Subſequent Hiſtory of the *Acts*, That *Peter* was all this time in or near *Jury*.

Nor in the Fifth or Sixth.

Paul being Converted in the Second Year after Chriſt's Aſcenſion (as 'tis commonly agreed, and near the end of it as we have ſhew'd) in his Journey to *Damaſcus*, *Acts.* 9. did there immediately Preach the Goſpel, and from thence in the bordering Country of *Arabia* for three Years time, *Gal* 1. 16. And upon his return to *Damaſcus*, *V* 17 and danger of being taken, eſcapes by a Basket out of a Window, *Acts* 9. 24. and 2. *Cor.* 11. 32. And then goes up to *Jeruſalem* to ſee *Peter* (the Phraſe intimates as if that were his known uſual place of Reſidence) and found him there accordingly; And having ſtaid with him 15 days. *Gal.* 1. 18. went away for *Tarſus*, *Acts*, 9. 31. this muſt be at leaſt in the Fourth Year of *Pauls* Converſion, (for it is expreſly ſaid, *after three Years*) and conſequently in the Sixth of the Paſſion.

After

After this visit of *Pauls*, and his being sent to *Tarsus*, we are assured, *Acts* 9. 31, 32. that the Churches had rest throughout all *Judea*, and *Galilee*, and *Samaria*; and that *Peter passed throughout all those quarters*. How many Years he spent in Preaching to those Countries is not mentioned; But that (amongst the rest) he came to *Lydda*, where healing *Eneas* that had been Bedrid Eight Years, the fame of that Miracle drew thither the inhabitants of *Lydda* and *Saron*, who by *Peters* Preaching were all Converted to the Lord, which argues he bestowed some considerable time there. Thence he was sent for to *Joppa*, raised dead *Dorcas* to life, and tarried there *many days*: Some days he staid with *Cornelius*; And after all returning to *Jerusalem*, the *Circumcised* seem'd scandaliz'd at his Preaching to the Gentiles, whom he satisfies in that point, *Acts* 11.2. and continues there until he was imprisoned by *Herod* the King, and miraculously delivered, *Acts* 12. Which Chapter no man can read (comparing it with the last Verse of the Chapter foregoing) but he must believe that it was the intent of St. *Luke*, the Inspired Penman, to signifie that this Imprisonment of *Peter* and death of *Herod* were both in one year, and the latter very suddenly after the former: For *Chap.* 11.30. he tells us of *Barnabas* and *Saul's* being sent up with Contributions from *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*; then immediately proceeds, *Chap.* 12. to relate the killing of *James*, and this Imprisonment and deliverance of *Peter*; to which he forthwith subjoyns, *That Herod having in vain sought for him, went down to Cæsarea*, where assuming *Divine Honours*, he was eaten of Worms and died; and then adds,—*But the Word of God grew and multiplied*; *And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their Mini-*

Peter not at *Rome* between the fifth and twelfth year after the Passion.

Miniſtry, &c. *Peter* therefore was at *Jeruſalem* in the year, and about the time that King *Herod* died.

But *Herod* died in the fourth year of the Reign of *Claudius*, and 12th after the Paſſion; which I thus prove:

First, *Joſephus* (o) teſtifies that this *Herod* (whom he calls *Agrippa*) obtain'd not leave to go to his Kingdom of *Jewry* till the ſecond year of *Caligula*: And the ſame Author * ſaith, that the ſaid *Herod* died in the ſeventh year of his Reign. Therefore ſince *Caligula* Reigned in all not full four years, it follows that *Herod* could not dye before the fourth year of *Claudius*, who was *Caligula*'s Succeſſor.

(o) *Joſeph. Antiq. L.18. Ca. 8.*

* *Lib.19.Ca.7*

Secondly, This is further confirm'd by that Paſſage, *That the Tyrians and Sidonians* (againſt whom this *Herod* had conceiv'd a diſpleaſure, and to chaſtize whom he went down to *Caſaria* preſently after *Peter*'s deliverance) *made Friends to obtain Peace of him*; *becauſe* (ſays the Text, *Verſ.*20.) *their Countrey was nouriſh'd by the Kings*; ſignifying that during the *Famine* then raging, they had Proviſions from thence: Which Dearth or Famine was that which *Agabus* the Prophet had ſome time before propheſied of at *Antioch*, of which 'tis generally ſaid, *Acts* 11. 28. *That it came to paſs in the days of Claudius*; but as other Authors, (particularly *Uſſergenſis*) have noted, it was in the fourth year of *Claudius*.

Thus I conceive it very plain and certain, that *Peter* was conſtantly in and about *Judea* till the fourth year of *Claudius*, (that is, the 12th of the Paſſion, and 45th of our Lords Nativity) which not only leaves no room for his ſeven years Epiſcopacy at *Antioch*, which is ſuppoſed to have been before this time, but alſo utterly overthrows the Conceit of his Arriving at

Rome

Rome in the ſecond year of *Claudius*; and ſo, perfectly annuls the credit of their principal Evidence, and razes the ſtory at the very Foundation; ſo that we might well enough ſpare our pains in ſearching any further. But we will not ſtand with them for a few years miſtake, but examine quite thorough, and give them *full meaſure, heaped up, preſſed down and running over.*

That *Peter* was at *Jeruſalem* at the death of the Virgin *Mary*, the Fifth year of *Claudius*, that is the 13th after his Paſſion, is atteſted by *Nicephorus* (*L.* 2. *Ca.* 21.) but be that as it will, 'tis certain he was there *in the 16th year of the Paſſion*, at the Aſſembly of the Apoſtles and Brethren mentioned *Acts* 15. and made a Speech there, as appears *V.* 7. of that Chapter. Now to prove that this Synod was held at this time, viz. the 16th year of the Paſſion, Read *Galatians* 2. 1. *Then Fourteen years after I went up again to* Jeruſalem *with* Barnabas, *and took with me* Titus *alſo*, &c. By which and the ſubſequent Context, it ſeems evident to me, that *Paul* thereby meaneth his coming to this Councel, and not any other time of his repairing to *Jeruſalem*, and ſo doth St. *Hierom* underſtand it, which being 14 years after St. *Pauls* Converſion, falleth out to be in the year of our Lord 49. and the Eighth of *Claudius*.

Peter not at *Rome* between the 12th and 16th years of the Paſſion.

I forget not that St. *Hierom* and divers others that follow him, date theſe 14 years not from *Pauls* Converſion, but from his firſt Journey to *Jeruſalem* three years after, and ſo place this Synod *Anno Dom.* 51. or rather as they ſhould ſay 52. in the 10th or 11th of *Claudius*, which though it ſeems to favour our Cauſe, as proving *Peter* to continue ſo much the longer at *Jeruſalem* or the neighbouring parts of *Aſia*, yet ſince my

my Aim in these Researches is solely the discovery of Truth, I cannot admit thereof: Because in the Ninth year of *Claudius* it was as *Orosius* () witnesseth, That the *Jews* were all banisht *Rome*; And at that time *Paul* was at *Athens*, as *Vspergensis* () writeth; and it appeareth likewise by the History of the *Acts*; for *Paul* departing from the Councel after a tedious Journey to *Antioch*, *Syria*, through *Cilicia* and many other Regions, came to *Athens* and thence to *Corinth*, where he met with *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, who (sayth the Text) were *lately* (just then, some Versions render it) *Come from* Italy, *because* Claudius *had commanded that all Jews should depart from Rome*; Which shews that this Council must be held some considerable time before this Decree of *Claudius*, that is, before the 9th of his Reign.

() Oros. L. 7. C. 6.

() In Claud 7. Ca. 24.

It it be inquired where *Peter* was from the time of his delivery out of Prison in the fourth year of *Claudius*, until this Synod in the Eighth year of his Reign? I answer, That as the Gests or Actions of St. *Paul* (after *Herods* death) amongst the Gentiles are described, in the 13th and 14th Chapters of the *Acts*, so during that time, it seems clearly intimated, that *Peter* was Labouring amongst the *Jews* either *at Jerusalem*, or those dispersed in the neighbouring Territories of *Asia*, to whom he afterwards directed his Epistle; for so saith St. *Paul*, speaking of his entertainment amongst the Apostles at this Council or coming up to *Jerusalem* 14 years after his Conversion, *Gal* 2. 7. *When they saw That the Gospel over the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the Gospel over the Circumcision was to* Peter, *for he that was mighty by* Peter *in the Apostleship of the Circumcision*, &c.

And in this interval I humbly conceive it was (tho

(tho not ſpecified in the *Acts*) that *Peter* was at *Antioch*, when *Paul* reproved him to the Face, mentioned *Gal.* 2 ſince it could not well be at any time before, as appears by the precedent diſcourſe; but that it was before the ſaid Council of the Apoſtles at *Jeruſalem*, ſeems very probable, becauſe if it had been afterwards, *viz.* when the matter had been ſo ſolemnly determined that Circumciſion was not neceſſary, *Peter* could not have had any ſcruple of eating with the Gentile Believers, nor fear of offending them in that point, that came from *James*. Thus until the 16th year of the Paſſion, Eighth of *Claudius*, *Peter* came not within One Thouſand Miles of *Rome*.

Peter not at *Rome* before the 12th of *Claud.*

In the *Ninth of Claudius* all Jews were Baniſht *Rome* (as is proved before) therefore then *Peter* could not be there. Nor was, nor had he been there in the 12th of *Claudius*, for then *Paul* wrote his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and undoubtedly if *Peter* had been the Founder or Biſhop of that Church then, or at any time before, *Paul* would in ſo large a letter have taken ſome occaſion to recommend his Pains, and to exhort them to continue in the Doctrine of the Prince of the Apoſtles; but on the contrary, tho he concludes with particular Salutes to 24 Perſons by name (beſides ſeveral Houſholds) and divers of them *Women*, yet he does not ſo much as mention *Peter*: Now if *Peter* had been Biſhop there, and ſoveraign Head of the Apoſtles, that omiſſion of paying his reſpects to him, whilſt he did it to ſo many others of inferiour condition, would have been not only a *Solæciſm* in Civility, but a failure in Duty.

But how does it appear that this Epiſtle was wrote at this time? —— Thus, *Ch.* 15. 23. *Paul* uſes this diſcourſe —— *Having now no more place in theſe parts,*

(that is, about *Antioch*, whence this Epistle is dated) *and having a great desire these many years to come unto you, whensoever I take my Journey into Spain, I will come to you; but now I go into* Jerusalem, &c. so that 'tis evident this was wrote upon his Journey sometime going to *Jerusalem*: we must therefore consider at what time especially this was, for we read of *Paul*'s going thither five several times, the first in the Ninth, the second in the Twelfth, the third in the 15th, the fourth in the 18th, and the fifth in the 21th Chapter of the *Acts*; But it could be in none of the first three Journeys, for he had not then met with *Timothy*, whom he found not till a good while after his return from the Synod at *Jerusalem*, *Acts* 16. 1. but at the writing of this Epistle, *Timothy* was with him, for he send's Salutations from him, *Ch.* 16. 21. Nor seems it to be the fourth time, mentioned *Acts* 18th, for *V.* 1. ere *Paul* return'd to *Jerusalem* it is said that he departed from *Corinth*, and *Priscilla and Aquila* were then at *Rome*, for thither he sends salutations to them. It remains therefore that this Epistle was written just before *Pauls* last comming up to *Jerusalem*; which agrees with what is said, *Acts* 19. 20. compared with the before-cited Text, *Rom.* 15. 23. And such his last Journey thither was in the 12th of *Claudius*.

For being there taken, *Felix* was then Governour *Acts* 23. 24. who as *Josephus* () witnesseth, was not made President of *Judea*, till the 11th of *Claudius*; And by *Tertullus*'s Oration to him, accusing *Paul*, we may gather that he had then for some time, a year at least, been in that command; so that it must be about the 12th of *Claudius*: Which further appears, for that it is said, *Paul* had been two years a Prisoner when *Portius Festus* came to be Governour instead of *Felix*, who

() Lib. 20. C. 5.

who was sent thither by *Nero*, as soon as he came to the Empire; wherefore since *Claudius* died in his 14th year, and *Festus* came presently after, and *Paul* had been then two years a Prisoner, it follows that such his last coming to *Jerusalem* and the writing of this Epistle must be in or about the 12th year of *Claudius*, the 20th of the Passion, and of our Lords Birth 53. And consequently at that time for the Reasons aforelaid, we may justly believe *Peter* was not at, nor Bishop of *Rome*. Nay St. *Ambrose* upon the Epistle to the *Romans*, saith, that he had read in certain Antient Books that at the sending of this Epistle, *Narcissus* (to whose family salutation is sent) was the senior, Bishop, or Elder of the Congregation at *Rome*.

Peter had not been at *Rome* the 24th Year after the Passion.

Again, *Peter* neither was nor had been Bishop of *Rome* in the second year of *Nero* (the 24th of the Passion and 57th of the Incarnation) for then *Paul* came thither, as is testified by *Eusebius*, *Urspergensis*, and others; at whose arrival, St. *Luke* who was then with him, saith, *Acts* 28. 15. *The Brethren hearing of us, came forth to meet us*, &c. But we hear not a word of *Peter*'s either coming or sending to *Paul*, which undoubtedly, if he had been Bishop there, he would have done; nor would St. *Luke* have neglected to record it. But the third day after, *Paul* sending for the chief of the Jews, and reasoning with them about the Faith, they answer'd him thus,——*We will hear what thou dost think, for touching this Sect* [the Christians] *it is every where spoken against*; and when at a day appointed, *Paul* had preached unto them, *the Jews fell at variance about it, for some Believed, and some Believed not*; All which shews that the Jews at *Rome* had heard very little of *Christ* before *Pauls* arrival, which could not have been, if *Peter* (the peculiar Apostle of the

Circumcision) had then, or for a matter of fourteen years ever since the second of *Claudius*, or indeed for any time before, been at *Rome* and Bishop there.

Peter not at *Rome* in the third or fourth year of *Nero*.

In the Third and Fourth years of *Nero* (*two whole years*, says the Text, *Acts* 28. 30.) *Paul* continued a Prisoner at large at *Rome* after his coming thither: Now that *Peter* was not in any of that space there, we rationally conclude, not only because *Nicephorus*, *L.* 2. *Ca.* 3 saith, That during all that time St. *Paul* lived by the labour of his Hands; whereas if *Peter* had been there in his Pontifical Dignity, he would certainly have caused him to be better provided for; but especially for that in the several Epistles written by *Paul* from thence in that time partly, and partly perhaps some time after, (for how much longer he continued at *Rome* than after the said two years elaps'd, we have no certain account) he no where makes mention of *Peter*; which if *Peter* had been look'd upon as Soveraign of the Church, and his being Bishop of such a Place, a matter of so great Importance, could never have been; especially since *Paul* had often very just occasion to have taken notice thereof; As in that to the *Galatians*, where *Paul* being inforc'd to assert the Authority of his Doctrine and Apostleship, which some sought to impair, speaks much of the former acquaintance between him and *Peter*, but not a word of seeing him at this time; when *Peter*'s Testimony, by subscription or otherwise, would readily have satisfied those Opposers; or *Paul* instead of all the Arguments he makes use of, might have said no more then this, Here is *Peter* the Prince of the Apostles, Bishop of this City, (which he has chosen to be the fountain of Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and infallible Judge of Controversies to the Worlds end) who does at this instant own

and

and allow my Apoſtleſhip, and give me the right hand of Fellowſhip.

Nay, *Paul* in theſe Epiſtles does not only omit to mention *Peter*, but uſes Words that in effect deny his being then at *Rome*; As in that to the *Coloſſians* (which muſt be Written about this time, becauſe therein mention is made of *Demas*, as being then with *Paul*, who afterwards forſook him, as appears in the ſecond of *Timothy*) having told them that *Ariſtarchus* his Fellow-Priſoner, and *Marcus*, Siſters Son to *Barnabas*, and *Jeſus* called *Juſtus* (who are of the Circumciſion) ſaluted them, *Coloſ.* 4. 10. & 11. He adds, *Theſe only are my fellow-Helpers* (which I underſtand, of thoſe of the Circumciſion, to whom he had juſt before reſtrain'd his ſpeech, for preſently he mentions *Epaphras*, *Luke* and *Demas*, who poſſibly might be *Greeks*) *unto the Kingdom of God, who have been a Comfort unto me.* To *Philemon* he ſends Salutations from the ſame Perſons, and calls them again his fellow-Labourers. Now was *Peter* (ſuppoſing too that he long before, and at that time, was Biſhop of *Rome*) Inferior to theſe? Was he not worthy to be Named? Were the Salutations, the Benedictions of the Apoſtles not to be expected? *At my firſt Defence* (I take it to be before *Nero* at this time we are Treating of) ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *No man ſtood with me, but all men forſook me*, 2 Tim. 4. 16. Can we imagine with any kind of ſobriety that *Peter* was then at *Rome?*

Peter not at *Rome* during the reſt of *Nero's* Reign.

Whether St. *Paul* departed from *Rome* immediately after the ſaid two years of his being a Priſoner at large, is not ſpecified in Scripture; but 'tis reaſonable to believe, that in that ſpace having ſo well Planted the Goſpel there, he might as ſoon as opportunity would admit, Travel into other Parts to diſſeminate the

the ſame glad Tidings, and eſpecially in *Spain*, which Countrey, it appears, *Rom.* 15. 24. he had long before deſigned to Viſit; ſome Authors ſay that not only he, but St. *Peter* too, was in our *Britain*, which I take to be as true as that *Peter* was Biſhop of *Rome*: But very plain it is, that *Paul* did again return to *Rome*, and was there not long before his Death; for in his ſecond Epiſtle to *Timothy* he Writes—*I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand*, &c. Ch. 4. 6. Now as it appears both by the Subſcription and Circumſtances, that this Epiſtle was Dated from *Rome*, when *Paul* was brought (that is in danger, or ready ſhortly after to be brought) *before Nero the ſecond time*; ſo 'tis agreed that *Paul* ſuffer'd near the End of *Nero*'s Reign; but at that time *Peter* was not at *Rome*, for *Paul* very Mournfully complains, *V.* 10. Demas *hath forſaken me, having loved this preſent World, and is departed into* Theſſalonica, Creſcens *to* Galatia, Titus *into* Dalmatia, *only* Luke *is with me*—*Therefore do thy diligence to come ſhortly unto me, and bring* Mark *with thee, for he is profitable unto me for the Miniſtry.* If only *Luke* were with him at *Rome*, then *Peter* was not there; nor do we hear a ſyllable of his two pretended Suffragans, *Linus* and *Cletus*: If *Peter* had been there at that time, what need of ſuch earneſt ſending ſo far as *Epheſus* for *Timothy*? Nor had *Peter* been at *Rome* in any of the *Intermediate Years* after *Pauls* firſt Arrival, as may be Collected from that Paſſage in *Tacitus*, where Relating how *Nero* endeavoured *to caſt the Odium of Burning of Rome* (which happen'd near the end of his Reign) *upon the Chriſtians*; he takes notice that then or about that time, that Sect had began *to Revive again*, or encreaſe more than for ſome years before;

which

which may well be understood in this sense, That the Christians, who during *Pauls* absence, had somewhat declined, did now at his return begin to Re-flourish and Multiply: But if *Peter* in that Ten years space, or thereabouts of *Pauls* Absence, had been at *Rome* exercising his *Episcopacy*, there could have been no place for that Observation of the Christian Religions REVIVING (which supposes a *Decay* for some years before) at that Particular Juncture.

CHAP VII.

Objections answer'd, and one Argument added, That we cannot, without great Dishonour to St. Peter, *imagine him to have been* Bishop of Rome, *as is pretended.*

Bellarmines Scheme of St. Peter's Travels.

TO avoid this plain deduction from Holy Scripture, Cardinal *Bellarmin* is forc'd to use a great deal of Pains and Art, and thus at last he performs it, at Five or Six Motions, as follows.

1. *He says, That* Peter *after our Lords Passion remain'd almost, but not full five years in* Judea, *in which time* Paul *paid him his first visit*, Gal. 1.

2. *That then he removed to* Antioch, *and was Bishop there for near seven years, but during that time travelled into and Preached through the Neighbouring Provinces.*

3. *That in the seventh year of his Episcopacy at* Antioch, *he return'd to* Jerusalem, *and was there Imprisoned.*

4. *That being there miraculously released, he the same year*

year (which was the second of Claudius) *came to* Rome, *and there fixt his Seat, which he held* 25 *years,* viz. *till his Martyrdom.*

5. *Yet for all that, within seven years* return'd *back to* Jerusalem *upon a* Decree *that* Claudius *set forth, commanding all Jews to depart from* Rome, *mentioned Acts* 18. 2. *and so came to be present at* Jerusalem, *when* Paul *from* Antioch *went up thither, and the Council of the Apostles, Acts* 15. *was held there.*

6. *But after the death of* Claudius *repaired again to* Rome, *where in the second year of* Nero, Paul *arriv'd, and in the* 14*th year of* Nero *they were both put to Death.*

To all which I Answer.

Answ. 1. As the old *Astronomers* were forc'd to invent various *Epicycles* and feigned motions of the Planets to solve the *Phænomina*, without regard whether they were *true*, or *false*, that is, had any real existence in Nature or not, provided they would but serve a turn to support their *Hypothesis*; so I must crave leave to say, The Learned Cardinal carries the blessed Apostle St. *Peter* 15 or 1600 miles back and forwards, to and fro at his own pleasure, meerly to render their notion of his being at *Rome* possible; But by what Authority, on what proof does he do this? There is not the least intimation in Scripture but that *Peter* remain'd in or near *Jerusalem* as much to the time of the *Council*, as for the first five years; there is not a syllable of his *going* unto, *coming back* from *Rome*, or *return thither* again; and if it were true, what reason can be immagined why St. *Luke* should omit it in the *Acts* of the Apostles, falling within the compass of his Story; nay 'tis plain that he was at *Jerusalem* a considerable time before that Council was held; for *Acts* 15. 1. 'tis said, Those that troubled the Church of *Antioch* went down from

from *Judea*, and *V.* 24. 'tis ſaid by the Apoſtles (whereof *Peter* was one) in their Joint Letter, Certain men that went out *from Us.*

2. Touching *Peters* being Biſhop of *Antioch*, we have ſpoken before (*Chap.* 3.) and ſhall here only add, That *Bellarmin* himſelf in this ſame Chapter ſays, Peter *ſhould have left a moſt Pernitious Example of a Chriſtian Paſtor, if he had at once Retain'd two particular and proper Biſhopricks* (which yet it ſeems *Onuphrius* thought no diſparagement) but would it not be an Example equally pernitious, if Retaining but one, he ſhould very ſeldome or *never* Reſide there? For I conceive *Non-Reſidency* as bad as *Pluralities*; and indeed the chief reaſon againſt *Pluralities*, is becauſe they are thought to Imply *Non-Reſidency*: But I think it will Unavoidably follow, that *Peter* muſt be generally *Non-Reſident*, if being ſtated Biſhop either of *Antioch* or *Rome*, he Travelled ſo many other Provinces during the ſame time, and yet every other while was found at *Jeruſalem.*

3. That *Peter* upon the Decree of *Claudius*, That the Jews ſhould depart from *Rome*, did fly thence and ſo came to *Jeruſalem*, as it were Accidentally, to that Council, *Acts* 15. is like the reſt, aſſerted *Gratis.* And as the ſame did neither ſuit with the Zeal and Chriſtian Fortitude of *Peter*, ſo to Abandon his flock; ſo I conceive it may manifeſtly be proved to be falſe from the *Acts* of the Apoſtles; where we Read, That *Paul* and *Barnabas* immediately after that Council, return'd to *Antioch*, ſtaid there ſome time; That afterwards *Paul* took a Journey into *Syria* and *Cilicia*, and thence to *Derbe* and *Lyſtra*, and having Travelled through *Phrygia*, *Galatia*, *Myſia* and *Troas*, came into *Macedonia* (where *Philip* was caſt into Priſon) thence he

passed to *Amphipolis* and *Apollonia*, to *Thessalonica*, *Berea*, and as far as *Athens*, *Acts* 15, 16, & 17. And after all these tedious Perigrinations (which must require and take up a very considerable time) when he came to *Corinth*, he found there *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, who LATELY (or as the *Syriac Version* has it, *eo ipso tempore*, *just then*) were come out of *Italy*, upon that Edict of *Claudius*, so that the said *Edict* must be after the Council, and consequently could be no ground for *Peters* being then at *Jerusalem*.

4. If *Peter* were supream Governour of the Church, and had before that Council at *Jerusalem* been seven years Bishop of *Antioch*, and for as many years and at that present time, been Bishop of *Rome*, both Cities of the Gentiles, and yet not without considerable numbers of Jews therein; 'tis strange, he had not before determined that Question, touching *the Circumcision of the Gentiles*; or it might have been a sufficient Argument for *Paul* and *Barnabas* to have said, *Peter the Quondam Bishop of this City, and now of* Rome, *Christs Vicar and Prince of the Apostles, Taught and Practised otherwise.*

5. 'Tis most improbable, which *Bellarmine* here asserts, *viz.* That *in one and the same year Peter* should be Bishop of *Antioch*, Imprisoned at *Jerusalem*, and yet also *in that very Year* come to *Rome* and make himself Bishop there; Let any Judicious Person but consider the great distance of those several places, and the inconveniencies of *Travelling* in those days, and that there appears not the least ground for such his *Posting to and fro*, and he will be apt to suspect it altogether *Romantic*, or a story fitter for the *Legend*, than an *Article of Faith*.

Object. 2. To that of *Pauls not saluting Peter* in his Epistle to the

the *Romans*, the Cardinal says two things; First, *That the same St.* Paul *Writing to the* Ephesians, *mentions not St.* John; *nor* James *in the Epistle to the* Hebrews, *yet they were Bishops of those Churches.* Secondly, *That when* Paul *Wrote that Epistle,* Peter *was* not yet return'd *to* Rome *from the Apostolical Synod.*

To which I Answer.

Answer.

1. That the Cardinal has not proved, that either *John* or *James* were ever Bishops of those respective places in a strict and proper sense; St. *John* was never that I know of, reckon'd Bishop of *Ephesus*, nor could be so without displacing of *Timothy*, who, according to the Current Testimony of Antiquity, was by *Paul* constituted Bishop there; Nor does it appear that the Epistle to the *Hebrews* was wrote to those at *Jerusalem*; Nor lastly was St. *James* then alive; so that there is no Parity.

2. As for *Peter*'s not being *Return'd* as yet to *Rome*, *Aquila* and *Priscilla* were got back, for he *sends greeting to them*; Together with whom *Bellarmine* affirms, *Peter* was expell'd; and why not *Peter*, the Bishop of the place, as soon as they? We find *Paul* had a firm or longing Resolution to go to *Rome* as soon as possible, *Rom.* 1. 13. and *Ch.* 15. 22. and 23. But sure *Peter*, if he had been Bishop there, would much rather have been Intent on that Journey.

3. Tho *Peter* had been Absent, yet if he had been peculiar Bishop of that Church, 'tis not Credible, that *Paul* would not at all have taken notice of him; for that Episcopacy of *Peter* there, would not have been *a forreign*, nor any of the least Causes fit to be mentioned, of his giving thanks on the Romans behalf, as *Ch.* 1. 8. or in their Praises, as *Ch.* 16. 19.

Paul doubtleſs would have pray'd no leſs for *Peters* proſperous return, then he does for his own happy Journey; And adviſed them too, as well for to pray for the *Reſtitution* of *Peter*, as for his own preſence amongſt them, *Ch.* 15. 30. at leaſt in that Admonition, *Ch.* 16.18. where he mentions the *Doctrine they had Learnt*, how ſeaſonably might he have made the ſame *Commemoration*, as elſe where he uſes of himſelf on a like occaſion, 2 *Tim* 3. 14. *Continue in what you have Learnt, knowing from whom you have learnt them, to witt, from* Peter *the only Rock under Chriſt of the Church.* 'Tis plain it is uſual with St. *Paul*, to lay hold on all occaſions of naming with honour the faithful Miniſters of thoſe Churches to whom he wrote, whether they were preſent or abſent: As, 1 *Cor.* 16. 15. *Epheſ.* 6. 21. *Phil.* 2. 19. *Coloſſ.* 4. 9, 12, and 13. for this tended much to the Edification of the Churches. And why ſhould he not much more have done the ſame *here*, where he had ſo Eminent Occaſion for it, to have given Atteſtation to *Peter*'s Supream and Paſtoral Office, and the wonderful Happineſs and Priviledge of the *Romans* in being under his peculiar Conduct.

Object. 3. The Cardinal urges further, That nothing can be concluded from Authority *Negatively*.

Anſw. I Reply, Our Arguments before recited are not only drawn from *Authority Negatively*, but alſo from the *leſs to the greater*; *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and in ſeveral others from thence, at ſeveral times, mentions others *leſs* to be remembred; therefore he would not have been *ſilent of Peter*, if he had been at *Rome*. 'Tis alſo from the *Genus* to the *Species*, in the places cited from *Coloſ.* and *Tim.* for if *none* but ſuch and ſuch were there, it undeniably follows *Peter* was not there.

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Bellarmin would perſwade us that *Paul*, *Coloſſ.* 4. 11. ſpeaks only of his own *Domeſticks*; or ſuch as were his proper *menial Servants*, and in the 2d of *Tim.* 4. of ſuch as were to *ſtand his freinds* to *Nero*. *Obj.* 4.

It does not appear, nor is it probable, that *Ariſtarchus*, whom he calls his *fellow Priſoner*, and *Marcus*, and *Juſtus*, and *Luke*, whom he ſtiles the *Beloved Phyſician*, were *Pauls Domeſticks* or Servants, (the good holy humble Apoſtle did not keep ſo great a Retinue, as an Author that Theologiz'd *in Purple*, and vy'd dignity with *Kings* might be apt to imagine) nor does he ſpeak only of them, but of all his *fellow helpers* in the Goſpel, and therefore ought not to omit *Peter*; And in *Timothy* he ſpeaks of ſuch as *ought to have ſtrengthned him*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 17. in which office of Love *Peter* would not have been wanting, nor do we read, nor is it likely that *Paul* ever deſired any Interceſſors with *Nero*. *Anſw.*

Laſtly, The Cardinal ſays, that at that time when *Paul* came to *Rome*, and when he wrote theſe Epiſtles, *Peter* perhaps was *not at Rome*, for tho he had there fixt his Seat, he was yet very often abſent. *Object.* 5.

If they could once ſolidly prove, that ever he was *Preſent*, we would grant that he might be often *abſent*. But if his work as an Apoſtle did call him ſo frequently into other parts, why would he undertake to be the proper Biſhop there? If *Peter* were abſent, would not *Paul* in ſuch diſtreſs have mentioned and bewail'd it? Or at leaſt how came it to paſs, that he never mentions *Linus* and *Cletus* the two pretended *Suffragan-Biſhops*? In fine, *Peter* it ſeems was four or five and twenty years Biſhop of *Rome*, but never *there* when the Scripture has occaſion to mention either him, or the Believers in that City; nor could *Paul* ever meet him *Anſw.*

him *there*, till just they came to be put to death; and that too is uncertain.

Thus I have not only prov'd by *a Deduction, seriatim*, that it is not credible, that ever *Peter De facto* was at *Rome*, but also answer'd all the *Objections* that I have met with, made thereunto. I shall conclude this Chapter with this observation, That we ought not, for *that Reverence* we bear to St. *Peters* memory, imagine that he was seven years Bishop of *Antioch*, and four or five and Twenty years of *Rome*, both Cities of the Gentiles; Because it appears, *Gal.* 2. 7. first, that *Peter* was the *Apostle of the Circumcision*, that is, that the Jews were more especially committed to him as his Charge and Cure, *Concredited*, or left to his Trust (so the word in the Original imports) as the Gentiles were to *Paul*; and it must be our Blessed Saviour who Commissioned both, and respectively appointed them those Provinces. 2dly, That both of them till that time had diligently and with great success labour'd in such their several Provinces, *Peter* amongst the *Jews*, and *Paul* amongst the *Gentiles V.* 8. 3dly, That now by mutual consent, a *Covenant* and *Agreement* was entred into, between *James*, *Peter*, and *John*, on the one part, and *Paul* and *Barnabas* on the other, That the latter *should go unto*, that is, Preach the Gospel to *the Gentiles*, and the former (as before, so for the *future*) to those of the *Circumcision*. And this was either at the Assembly of the Apostles, *Acts* 15. or at least (if they were two distinct meetings) 14 years after *Pauls* Conversion, so that *Peter* according to *their Reckoning* must then be, and for some years had been *Bishop of Rome* (besides his seven years Bishoprick at *Antioch*) and what reason then had there been to mention only his Pains with the *Circumcision*, and to

'Tis a Reproach to St. *Peter*, to fancy him Bishop of *Rome*.

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put the ſame in Ballance with *Paul's* towards the *Uncircumciſion*? If *Peter* had Preached ſo long at *Antioch* and *Rome*, had he not many *Seals of his Miniſtry* amongſt the Gentiles? How many Thouſands might we ſuppoſe Converted by his Victory there over *Simon Magus*, which if ever Tranſacted, was before this time? And why then do we hear nothing thereof, but rather Intimations to the contrary, *viz.* That *Peter*, beſides his Preaching to *Cornelius* (upon an Extraordinary Occaſion) and ſome few others, had then made no great Progreſs amongſt the Gentiles, but chiefly had exerted his Talent amongſt the Jews; ſo that his ſucceſs with the *Latter*, is compared with *Pauls* amongſt the *Former*. Which to me is a Convincing Argument, That St. *Peter* at that time, had neither been Biſhop of *Antioch* nor *Rome*, nor ever at the latter City; which muſt be (reckon how you can) at leaſt, ſeveral years after the *ſecond of Claudius*; and conſequently does utterly overthrow the Roman Account.

Now the Queſtion will be, Whether *Peter*, *after* this Compact, either Continued or Undertook to be *Biſhop of the Gentiles at Rome* or not? If he did, He not only contradicted his particular Commiſſion which our Lord had given him to be the *Apoſtle of the Circumciſion*, and neglected the Jews, who were ſo Concredited to his proper Charge; but alſo Violated his *late ſolemn Agreement*. On the other ſide, If at the time of this Agreement, he either *were not Biſhop of Rome*, or then left it; It follows, that he continued not Biſhop of *Rome* four or five and twenty years, as with great *Confidence* and ſmall *Reaſon* is pretended.

Again, 'Tis nothing likely, if *Peter* had been then Biſhop of *Rome*, or deſigned ever to go and fix his Seat

Seat there at any time afterwards, that he would have entered into ſuch an Agreement.——Ay but, ſays *Bellarmin*, thoſe words [*that they ſhould go to the Circumciſion*] are to be qualified, and underſtood not Abſolutely, but Comparatively; as much as to ſay, They ſhould *Chiefly* or *Principally* Preach to the Jews, and in like manner *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the Gentiles. Be it ſo! We ask no more, for even then *this* ſhews either that he was not then Biſhop of *Rome*, or muſt be taken as a Relinquiſhment of his *Roman Dioceſs*, and transferring the Title and Cure thereof to *Paul*; for if he were the ſtated Biſhop of *Rome*, the chief City of the *Gentiles*, how could he promiſe to beſtow his *Chief Pains* on the Jews? Or having ſo promiſed, principally to Attend the Jews, how could he continue the proper Biſhop of *Rome*, and preſently after Reſort back thither, and ſpend almoſt all the reſt of his days amongſt the *Gentiles*? Was not this immediately to Violate that ſolemn Compact?

Moreover, If *Peter* were ſeven years Biſhop of *Antioch*, and afterwards 25 years of *Rome*, He muſt in all be 32 *years* in *Syria* and *Italy*, undertaking the Charge and Cure of the *Gentiles* in thoſe Provinces. And if his Martyrdom was, as *Baronius* Computes, *Anno Chr.* 69. The ſaid two and thirty years being deducted, brings us back to the year of Chriſt 37. but two or three after Chriſts Crucifixion, ſo that in all he could ſpend but three *years at moſt* amongſt the Jews; And why then is he ſo Emphatically ſtiled, *The Apoſtle of the Circumciſion*?

Wherefore ſince this Roman Pretence does by its Unavoidable Conſequences, caſt a *Reproach* on St. *Peter*, as if he had deſerted *that Charge*, which God had committed unto him, as if he had Notoriouſly Violated

lated that *Solemn Agreement* which himſelf had voluntarily and on juſt conſiderations entred into; ſince it repreſents him not only as deſerting the ſtation of an Apoſtle, by becoming *a Biſhop* in a ſtrict ſence; but alſo as giving a moſt dangerous Preſident of removing from a leſſer to a *greater Biſhoprick*, and at the ſame time ſets him forth, to be for the moſt part *Non-Reſident* in both his Dioceſſes. (All which are things unworthy to be Believed, Imagined or Suggeſted, of that Bleſſed Apoſtle) I cannot without being Injurious to his happy Memory admitt (but rather look upon my ſelf bound in Conſcience and Honour to *Oppoſe*) this Groundleſs Story, as it appears to me, of his being *Biſhop of Rome*, &c.

CHAP. VIII.

The Commonneſs *of an Opinion no certain Argument of its Truth*; Parallel Inſtances *given of things very generally, and long Believed and Delivered by Hiſtorians, yet afterwards found to be* Falſe; *The means and ſteps whereby this Notion of* Peter's *being* Biſhop *of* Rome *ſeems to have been promoted*; *The Concluſion.*

I know nothing elſe conſiderable, that remains to be taken notice of in this Enquiry, ſave only one *Grand Prejudice* or *Objection*, which the Gentlemen of the Roman Communion do much Triumph in, *viz.* That 'tis enough to ſatisfie any modeſt Man, in *Peter*'s

being at *Rome* and Biſhop of that City, That the ſame has generally been received, taken for granted for ſeverals Ages, and by abundance of Worthy Credible Writers, whom *Bellarmine* Ennumerates; and Affirms, It was *never diſputed by any that he knows of, until one William, John Wickliff's Maſter* (this muſt be about the year 1350. tho I cannot find *Wickliff* ever had any ſuch Maſter) *did firſt of all raiſe ſome ſcruples about it*: And how was it poſſible that ſuch a General Conceit ſhould ſo long have poſſeſs'd Mens minds, if the matter of Fact at bottom had not been real and undoubted?

To which is Anſwer'd:

1. That common Fame has long ſince been branded for none of the beſt *Evidences*; We have ſeen what Important Pretenſions are bottom'd on this ſuppoſed Action of St. *Peter*, and therefore ought to expect more Convincing Proofs of that Fact, than Vulgar Rumours or Publique Credulity, more eaſily Inveigled to ſwallow *Fables* then *Verities*.

2. Men of the *beſt Letters*, cannot always give a certain Account of the *Riſe* and *Progreſs* of all falſe Opinions. Errour is the Child of *Night*, Nurs'd in the *Dark* by *Ignorance*, *Superſtition* or *Self-Intereſt*: And when well-grown and gaily Dreſs'd, it comes abroad into the World; 'tis too often Courted and Embrac'd as the Legitimate Off-ſpring of *Truth*. Meer Fables, raiſed by ſome one Inconſiderable Author, do not ſeldom obtain wonderfully in the World, and for a long time deceive not only the *Mobile*, but even the *Learned*, loth to Incur a Popular Odium, or the Brand of *Singularity*; and ſometimes afraid of diſpleaſing *thoſe* that promote or *get* by the Impoſture, are content to let it paſs.

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We have every where Instances of this kind: As at home, *Geoffery* of *Monmouth*, from the Name *Britannia*, to add (as he thought) a Reputation of Antiquity to his Countreymen, divulges a story of *Brute* the *Trojan*, and presently our common Chronicles became swell'd with a long *Catalogue* of his Successors, and how many years each of them Reigned; which was generally received, till some of our more Judicious Historians examined it to the bottom, and think they have sufficiently prov'd it altogether *Fabulous*.

So the stories of King *Arthur*, and his Knights of the *Round Table*; so in *France* those of the *Palladine Roland*, and his wonderful *Chivalry*, found room not only amongst the *Poets* and *Romancers*, but with several *Historians*, which now are but the Proverb and Diversion of every *Peasant*.

The story of Pope *Joan* and Pope *Peter* Compared.

Or to take a more Remarkable Example, The Gentlemen of the *Roman Church* take it ill to be Urged with the story of Pope *Joan*, and Droll it as the Absurdest of Fables (how justly I am not now to dispute) but 'tis certain, the same is Recorded by a multitude of *Historians*, and for about 700 years (for so long it was from the time of her supposed Papacy () to *Luther*) or at least for about 500 years (for *Marianus Scotus*, the first that Wrote Publickly of her, whose Writings are extant, flourish'd in the 11th Century, and none that I ever heard of, pretended to Contradict it, till after *Luthers* time) It pass'd Uncontroul'd throughout *Christendome*, and was Related (to my knowledge) by above 30 Credible Authors of their own Communion. But about the year 1595. One *Florimond de Raemond*, a French Councellour at *Bordeaux*, undertook in an Elaborate Treatise, to Refute

() *Anno. Circ.* 855.

the whole ſtory: But by what Arguments? *That no Authors living at the ſame time with this pretended Papeſs, are found to atteſt it*; *Nor any till* Marianus Scotus, 200 *years after her*; *That the reſt of the Authors (tho Numerous) blindly follow'd him, and ſuckt in his Errour*; *That the ſeveral Relators agree not in their Tale*; *That the latter Writers had Invented ſeveral Circumſtances* [but he cannot charge them with *Corrupting* of Books, nor *Forging* of Authors] *to render it more Plauſible*; *That the whole thing and its ſeveral parts, are not Probable*, &c.

Now there is not one of theſe *Topicks*, but will ſerve as well, nay much better, to Impugn the ſtory of St. *Peters* being Biſhop of *Rome*; for as the latter tends exceedingly to the Advancement of that *See*, and the former to its Diſhonour; ſo conſidering what an Aſcendent its Biſhops had got over the Chriſtian World, 'tis much more probable that *a fiction in their Favour* ſhould be promoted; than that the *other* (if indeed it were a fiction) from which no Advantage could poſſibly be hop'd to be derived to the Relators, ſhould for a ſeries of ſo many years paſs Current, and without Oppoſition.

For my own part, I muſt Ingenuouſly avow (without preſuming to determine Dogmatically either way) that having Read *Erreur Populaire* on the one ſide, and our Learned *Coke* on the other (nay I will add *Blondellus* his *Poſthume Book* on that Subject, which ſeems to favour their Opinion who deny there was any ſuch *Papeſs*) *I cannot find any more Reaſon to believe there ever was a Pope* Peter, *than I do that there might be a Pope* Joan.

3. As to the Authority of the *Fathers* (beſides thoſe *Counterfeits* already diſcovered, which are Unworthy

worthy of that *Venerable Name*) there is not *One* so much as alleadged, who Wrote within *one hundred years* and upwards, after the supposed time of *Peters* death, that mentions his being or dying *at Rome*. Afterwards *Justin Martyr*, who flourisht about the year of our Lord, 170. and *Tertullian*, 219. are Cited for it, but as 'tis well known and confessed by Learned *Romanists*, that there are now abroad several Counterfeit Books in the Names of the Antients; so wherever they do in their Genuine Works, seem to Intimate St. *Peters* being *at Rome*, 'tis most Probable they might take the same on Trust from *Papias* or *Common Fame*; and looking on it as an indifferent thing, thought not themselves concern'd, nor the matter *worth while*, strictly to Enquire into the bottom of that Opinion; and so might be therein *mistaken*, as in other matters of *Fact*, happening not very long before their own times; For the same *Tertullian* () who is therein followed by *Clemens Alexandrinus* () and by *Lactantius* () says, *That our Lord Christ suffered in the 15th year of* Tiberius, *and the 30th of his own Age*: As on the contrary, *Irenæus* () contends, *That Christ Preached almost to 50 Years of Age, and suffered under* Claudius; For each of which Opinions, Antient *Tradition* is by them Alledged, yet are they *both* contrary to the Evangelists and all sound History; which yet Reflects no further *dishonour* on those *Holy Fathers*, than that they were *Men*, Capable of being *mistaken*, and were Unwarily deceived by Relying too much on pretended *Traditions*.

() *Tert.* L. *Contr. Judæos.*
() *Clem.* L. 1. *Stromat.*
() *Lact. Instit.* L. 4. C. 4.
() *Iren.* L. 2. Ca. 39.

As far therefore as I can perceive, the Opinion of *Peters* having been at *Rome*, began first to be Industriously and commonly Advanc'd, about or soon after the Reign of *Constantine*: For *Eusebius* (who surviv'd to Write the Life of that great Emperour) speaking of *Nero*, tells us, () *This Enemy of God set up himself to the Destruction of the Apostles, for* they Write, *That* Paul *was Beheaded and* Peter *Crucified by him at* Rome. *And that*

() *Eusеb.* L. 2. Ca. 25.

that which maketh for the Credit of the ſtory is, that it is COMMONLY REPORTED, *that there be Church-Lords unto this day bearing the Name of* Peter *and* Paul. *In like manner* Gaius, *a Roman and an Eccleſiaſtical Perſon, and after* Zepherinus *Biſhop of* Rome, *Writing unto* Proclus *Chief of the* Cataphrygian Hereticks, *ſays thus,*——I am able to ſhew the Banners of the Apoſtles: for if thou wilt walk into the Vatican, or the Oſtienſian-way, thou wilt find there Victorious Banners, of ſuch as have founded this Church. *And that they were both Crown'd with Martyrdome at the ſame time,* Dioniſius *Biſhop of* Corinth *declares in his Epiſtle to the* Romans, *in theſe Words,*——*And you Obſerving ſo goodly an Admonition, have Coupled in one the Building of the Roman and Corinthian Churches, perform'd by* Peter *and* Paul, *for they both Inſtructed us when they Planted our Church of* Corinth.——Thus *Euſebius.*

From whoſe Words it is Obſervable, That he does not at all aſſert *Peters* being Biſhop of *Rome*, nor poſitively that he was ever *there*, but only tells us that *they Write*; that is, *'tis Written* by ſome body or other, but ſays not by *whom*, That *Peter* and *Paul* were both put to Death by *Nero* at *Rome*; which yet it ſeems he look't up but as an *Hear-ſay* and *Doubtful*, and therefore to Confirm it, adds, That it *makes for the Credit thereof, that it was commonly Reported*, that there were to his time Burial-places that wore the Names of *Peter* and *Paul*. [As if after ſo many *Books* forged in *Peters* Name, a falſe *Tomb* might not two or three hundred years after his Death be aſſign'd to him]

As to what he Cites from *Gaius*, who he ſays was a Roman, and ſucceeded *Zepherinus*, the Words Import nothing of *Peters* being Biſhop of *Rome*, but ſeem intended to prove that the Church of *Rome* was founded by *ſome of the Apoſtles*, whoſe Monuments were to be ſeen in the *Vatican*, and *Oſtienſian-Way*. But as in the Catalogue of Popes, there is no ſuch Perſon as *Gaius* found to ſucceed *Zepherinus*; ſo we heard before from a *Decretal Epiſtle*, that it was Pope *Cornelius* that removed the Bodies of *Peter* and *Paul* from the *Catatombæ* to the *Vatican* and *Oſtienſian-way*. Now this *Cornelius* became Biſhop of *Rome* (as appears by their own Chronologiſts) 31 years in time, and the fixth Biſhop in *Order*, after *Zepherinus*; How then could *Zepherinus* Succeſſor (the words plainly imply his next Succeſſor) talk of their Monuments being there in his time?

The other Witneſs Cited by *Euſebius*, is *Dionyſius* of *Corinth* (who beſides that he is the ſame Man who (as *Euſebius* elſewhere tells us) did in his own Life-time, complain that his Writings were abuſed and added to) his words as here Related ſeem to ſignify, that (as there was very early a kind of Vanity or Emulation in Churches and Perſons, which prompted them to boaſt of thoſe that Converted them, which is reproved by *Paul* in that Text——*I am of* Paul, *and I of* Apollos, *and I of* Cephas, *&c.* ſo) this Biſhop of *Corinth*, would have his Church of *Corinth*, to be Planted both by *Peter* and *Paul*; and therefore to be the more nearly Related to the Church of *Rome*, whom he ſuppoſed (and perhaps the Romans might give it out ſo) to have the ſame Founders, every Country almoſt in proceſs of time (ſuch is the Natural Itch of Ambition and Vainglory in Man) pre-

pretending to have been Converted by some *Apostle* or *Illustrious Name*, though often times the Preaching of the Gospel amongst them was (like it self) by very mean, and as to Outward Glory or Fame, *Contemptible* Instruments.

But from this Testimony of *Eusebius*, we may Rationally Collect, That in his time *Peters* being at *Rome*, was but a *dark* kind of business, provable only by *Reports*, and such odd Testimonies of a few Obscure Authors, that have as little Weight as Clearness.

But how then came the same afterwards to be so generally Entertained and Believed, and several of the Fathers to call Rome *St.* Peters Chair? Object.

To this may be Answered, That the Bishops of *Rome*, after *Constantine* had raised them to a high degree of Wealth and Reputation, puft up with Ambition from their presiding over the *Imperial City*, began to aspire above their Brethren; and first Claim'd a Primacy and Right of Receiving *Appeals* from all parts; not *Jure Divino*, or as Successors to St. *Peter*, but as *Granted* to them by Councils; and to that purpose forged *two Canons* on the Famous *Nicene* Council, as is mentioned before; but finding themselves Cut short and Baulkt therein by the sagacity of the Council of *Carthage*, they cast about to derive a Supremacy over all other Churches from *an higher Title*; and Observing *Peter* to have been one of the most Eminent Apostles, and some Words to have been spoken to him by our Saviour, that might Colourably be wrested to Intimate as if he had some kind of Superiority over, or greater Priviledge than the rest, they would have it believed, That he was the *Founder* of their Church, and though sometimes they joyn'd *Paul* with him, because the Scriptures gave such Illustrious Testimonies of his pains there, yet for the most part *Peter* (without the least Countenance from, but rather *against* the Tenour of Scripture) had the greater Vogue and Preference; and knowing the *Mobile* are easie to be deceived with *Names* and *Titles*, and apt to frame *Ideas* of things *past*, from what appeared at present, they gave out, That he was Bishop of *Rome*. To this purpose they press'd all the Fragments of Antiquity into the Service: *Papias's Conjecture* was made an *Authentick proof*; and this saying of *Eusebius* and his hear-says, must pass for *Undoubted Evidence*. Yet not therewith Content, abundance of other Writings were *Counterfeited* under Antient Venerable Names (as I made appear before) and thus in short time the story might gain Credit. And whenever any of the *Fathers* (though Unwarily deceived by a *Spurious Tradition*, or the Common Vogue, not thinking it perhaps a matter much worth Enquiring into, as not dreaming what strange Inferences would thence be made in after times) spoke thereof in a stile Accommodated to Vulgar Opinion, and call'd *Rome* St. *Peters Chair*, or her Bishop, *Peters Successor*, this was filed as a fresh Testimony of the Truth and Certainty of the matter of Fact. *Answer.*

Having once gain'd this point, that it was believed, That *Peter* Preach'd at *Rome*, which they call'd his being Bishop there: They proceeded further, to pretend, That not only *Peter* had a Soveraign Power confer'd upon him, but that the same was derived to them as his Successors. And so——*Thou art* Peter——*I will give thee the Keys*——*I have Pray'd for thee*——*Here are two Swords*, &c. became sufficient Arguments, both that *Peter*

was

was Prince of the Apoſtles, Vicar of Chriſt, and Chief Governour of the Univerſal Church; And that he being ſo Dignified and Biſhop of *Rome*, all the ſucceeding Biſhops of that See, being his Succeſſors, muſt be Inveſted with the ſame Authority: And conſequently, That the Church of *Rome* was the *Mother and Miſtreſs of all other Churches*, and is *Infallible*, and the *only Catholick Church*; That the Pope has a direct Soveraignty over all the World in Spirituals, and indirect, *in Ordine ad Spiritualia*, &c.

All which being Cloſely and Vigorouſly, though Gradually purſued in Ignorant times, and eſpecially after the Roman Biſhops, by the favour of *Phocas* the Traytor, had gain'd the Title of *Univerſal*, and an Aſcendent over a great part of the Chriſtian World; when every thing tending to the Honour and Advantage of that *See*, met with Encouragement, and the Roman Biſhops only were Capable of beſtowing Preferments, and all were *Snub'd* and *Croſſed* that durſt offer any thing that diſpleaſed them, 'tis no wonder if for many Ages ſcarce any (at leaſt whole Writings yet remain, for we know who had *taken* the keeping of all *Libraries*) durſt openly controvert or deny St. *Peters* being at *Rome* and Biſhop there; Since this was a *Blow at the Root*, and ſtruck effectually at the Popes Supremacy, Infallibility and other Pompous Claims, which are all founded on that Pretence.

Touching which, what need I ſay more? But briefly ſum up the ſtate of the whole matter: If St. *Peter's* being Biſhop of *Rome*, or ſo much as ever there, be not provable by *Scripture*, nor any other *Convincing Arguments*; but whatever can be ſaid for it, is eaſily *Anſwered*, and rendered not ſo much as *Probable*; If the Witneſſes of the ſtory are at Open Wars and Contradictions in the Circumſtances, yet all pretending to a moſt punctual Exactneſs; and the Learned'ſt and moſt Subtle *Advocates* of the Party Sweat in vain, to Invent even ſo much as Colours to Reconcile them; If from *Scripture* and *Hiſtory*, and a due Compariſon of all Circumſtances, it is improbable to the higheſt Degree, That *ever Peter was at Rome*, much more that he was *Biſhop thereof*: If the ſtory depend on *Counterfeit Authors*, or ſuch as juſtly are of *little Credit*, and abundance of *ſhameful Forgeries* have been invented and made uſe of to ſupport it; If it be Derogatory to the *Honour* of St. *Peters* Memory to aſſert it: *In fine*, If it be no difficult task to apprehend and ſhew by *what Methods* and *Degrees* it might be advanc'd to popular Credit, and for *what Ends*: If I ſay, all this be made appear (and how far this brief Diſquiſition may be ſatisfactory that way, is left to the Judicious Unbigotted Peruſer, and Poſterity, to Determine) I conceive the old Out-cry of *Great is Diana of the Epheſians*; The Noiſe of St. *Peters Chair* and *Peters Succeſſors*, will henceforth abate ſomewhat of it's Influences; or indeed ſignify very little, unleſs it be to Expoſe *their Confidence* that Uſe it.

However. If any ſhall ſtill be Amus'd and Prevail'd upon by thoſe Empty Sounds and *Unravell'd Charms*, I may perhaps admire their *Faith*, or rather pitty their *Weak Credulity*, but muſt crave leave to ſay, That till my Reaſon is better ſatisfied (which with the Uttermoſt Diligence and Impartiality, I have endeavoured) It ſhall have no Room in *my Creed*. And ſo, Reader! *Farewell*.

FINIS.

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